PREACHING IN THE NEW ERA

EDITED BY

ELMORE McNEILL McKEE

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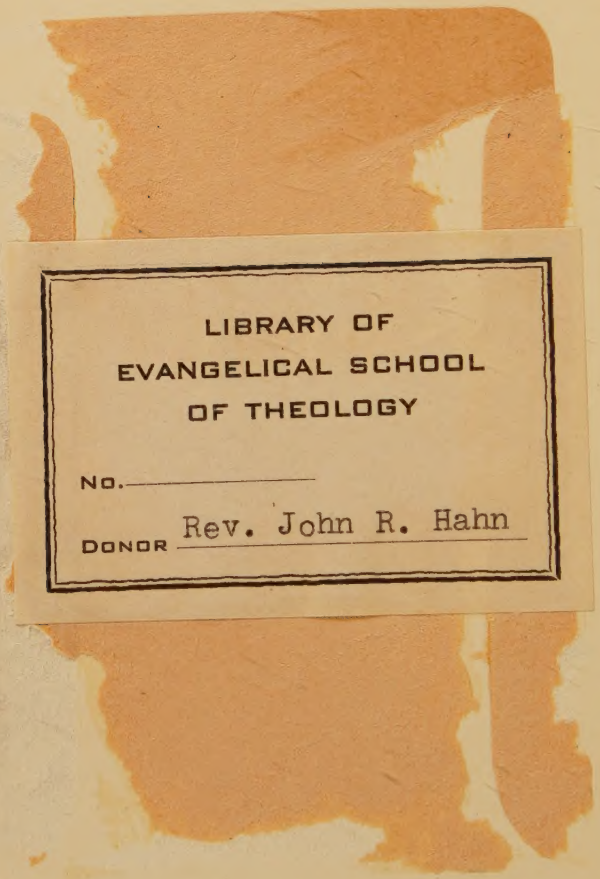
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PREACHING IN THE NEW ERA

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EDITED BY

ELMORE McNEILL McKEE
PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST
IN YALE UNIVERSITY

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
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FIRST EDITION

DEDICATED

TO THE YOUNG MEN AND YOUNG WOMEN
OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGES

AND ESPECIALLY

TO THAT THOUGHTFUL AND VIGOROUS MINORITY WHICH IS GIVING ITSELF FEARLESSLY TO THE LAYING HOLD OF THE TRUTH AND TO THE BUILDING OF A NEW WORLD.

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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INTRODUCTION

"PREACHING is dead." I heard it with my own ears, said by a religious leader to a gathering of theological students a few years ago. The words brought a shock, and the desire to dispute them, but I kept them for seasoned meditation. Are they true? This book is partially an answer.

Here the wayfarer can read the reasoned thought and catch the prophetic vision of fourteen ambassadors for Christ who in this Twentieth Century of intellectual revolution and spiritual cataclysm are carrying their message not simply to fine congregations of men, women, and children in America's cities and towns, but also into those front-line areas of the schools, colleges, and universities.

Can a man believe in God? In a God who is personal? In a God who is good? Is man a mechanism? Does he have freedom? Is prayer outgrown? Is the Church a hindrance? These are some of the questions with which freshman and senior alike find themselves faced in the newspaper and public forum, in textbook and classroom, and in those twilight hours when three or four gather as if by chance around some dormitory fireside, without tutelage from an elder, simply

to "talk." They take nothing for granted, are quick to detect the presuppositions accepted by another, and prefer to strike out on their own upon the seas of thought and experience where truth is separated from untruth.

Their thinking is not dead. At least for a large minority it is much alive. It is that which makes university life in this generation so interesting and even exciting. So when a visiting preacher gets off the train to talk with these young people upon life's meaning in this universe of mystery, and talks to them where they live and not from some planet of experience foreign to them, they listen. They soon learn whether he "knows his stuff," is aware of the searching questions they want answered, and whether what he says bears the unmistakable ring of reality. The preacher to these undergraduates must have *lived*, that is, felt something of temptation, joy, sorrow, pain, privation, responsibility, and the "pain in the head" which comes from mustering one's brain cells to answer the questions raised by behaviourism and the mechanistic view of life, poverty and wealth, crime and war, by Freud and Dewey and Mencken, by Shaw and Wells and Russell, by evolution, the comparative study of religion, and the historical criticism of the Bible. The thoughtful minority which is wrestling its way to its life

convictions is not shrinking from this battle of the mind and is quick to recognize a leader who has served his time in the ranks on the same battlefield and deserves to be its captain on a field of honour.

This is far from suggesting that the preachers contributing to this volume are effective because they are able to talk wisely by quoting many books. Occasionally the college preacher seems to be unloading references for effect. This is quickly detected. College congregations are not special bodies wanting special treatment, with a sermon every Sunday bristling with "science and religion." They get an overdose of that. They want the everlasting good news about God and are fairly thirsting for it, just as their mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters at home are. But the good news has to be presented to persons who are studying biology and chemistry, history and psychology, philosophy and evolution all through the week, and the preaching can never do violence to the habits of thought formed and the facts accumulated in the classroom. The less the preacher says about science perhaps the better. The more he is wedded to science, conversant with it, partner with it, the better. The student recognizes the preacher as his blood-brother by the background and sym-

pathetic spirit that shine through his words. The preacher need not prove this kinship by striking references to scientific works in every other paragraph. Pungent thought, in simple language, shot through a personality that has really thought and lived, gets home every time, and not only with the stamp of the everlasting upon it, but the everlasting in terms of the contemporaneous in which the undergraduate lives.

No, preaching is not dead. The man who said that to the seminarians was wrong. For college men and women quite of their own free will go to their chapels in considerable numbers to worship on Sunday mornings and will talk over what the preacher has said long after the warmth of the spoken utterance has cooled. And the thoughtful minority does this in preference to the many alternatives, accepted perhaps by the drifting majority, which are offered in these days of general prosperity, and which encourage the student to leave town over the week-end, to see his family and his friends, to use the new automobile, to see a show, to go to a dance, and to take in all that accompanies the great football game. The counter-attractions are legion and they are not diminished by parents and elders with whom undergraduates have little intellectual or spiritual kinship. All too often they—of the older

generation—refuse to reinterpret the religious creeds and moral codes of their youth in the light of the newer knowledge. Frequently—and here we have the more serious offenders—they are so absorbed in business and pleasure that they have allowed prayer, public worship, and religious discussion to vanish from their family life, and have never been interested in, nor shared with the slightest sympathy, the birth-pangs of the new intellectual life that is being born in their sons and daughters. Religion in the colleges must reflect the home and the world at large. But in spite of the odds against them, due to the scarcity of real leaders among their elders, and the confusion of tongues of this modern age, this younger generation is seeking the truth, searching out its prophets, and building a new world. And in the process preaching has its important place.

The sermons in this book are in no sense "best sermons." Some of the best preachers to American undergraduates are certainly not among the contributors. Nor have these sermons necessarily come from the "top of the pile" of the individual preacher. But it is fair to say, I believe, that they are "characteristic" of each preacher and "representative" of what the casual visitor will hear in college and university chapels. These

sermons appeal to and help the young men and young women who attend. Their authors are among the men invited to return from year to year. We have before us, therefore, a study in modern university preaching. The sermons of this volume have been preached in a score of educational centres, among them Amherst, Chicago, Cornell, Harvard, Leland Stanford, Princeton, Radcliffe, Vassar, Virginia, Wellesley, Williams, and Yale, and the contributors themselves are preachers collectively at two or three times as many centres of learning.

If there are weaknesses in these sermons the seminarian, the undergraduate, the teacher, the pastor, or the average parishioner who reads them will find them out.

Certain characteristics appear to me worthy of notice. First, the search for reality. The mind of the thoughtful student minority runs like this: "We must reject the unreal and outworn. We must find what is real and useful to us."

Second, the search for unity. "The day is filled with departmentalized study. We would put together the fragments. What is the unity underlying all?" Religion enters and the preacher helps to lead the student to reality and to the unifying of his thought.

Thirdly, that "minimizing of Jesus" which by

some is thought to be taking place in the religious thinking of the younger generation is not evident in those who preach effectively to them. To be sure the divine origin of the authority of Jesus is not presented, but the authority of youth's own experience is drawn upon to place Jesus centrally in their thought and life. This was Jesus' own method, for He said "Come and see." The Church, for instance, as an institution of peculiar importance, is viewed with extreme skepticism by the average undergraduate. He sees little use or significance in denominations, and if the Church arouses his interest at all, he would be a pioneer in breaking down the barriers. But, even if the Church is considered unimportant by most, the same individuals will be keen to find out the meaning of life and will join a group or a cult for the purpose. Thus the student's experience is analyzed and inductively yields its teachings upon God, Jesus, the Spirit, and the Church.

In the fourth place, the text has lost its exalted position. In only a portion of the sermons do the preachers give their first spoken words to a text. Some of the other speakers, if they have a text or a passage on which they are preaching, introduce it by leading up to it, and then weaving it in as their own thought develops. Only a few give their opening paragraphs to the biblical

setting. There is a tendency to "plunge into" the theme in the opening sentences, and not to risk a "restful" attitude on the part of hearers, but rather to arrest their attention at first greeting. The editor is not arguing for homiletical method but simply pointing out a fact.

Few universities, we may well rejoice, are satisfied to leave to the Sunday preacher the burden of official responsibility for religion. Daily worship usually is added to Sunday worship, with great attention paid to the leadership of it, its liturgical content, its music, and its architectural surroundings. Attendance is generally voluntary, though in a few centres it is required. The communion service is not neglected. There are organizational features, too—undergraduate committees promoting and supervising the worship, and frequently recommending the names of preachers to be invited by university authorities; and sometimes an actual student membership, comprising, with faculty families, a college church, governed by customary church procedure. The Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations and other religious bodies support, as a rule, and supplement in splendid fashion, the life that centres about the chapels or churches.

But perhaps the most significant recent de-

velopment lies in the new leadership which universities have drawn into their life. Additional members of the faculty have been added in many institutions to deal adequately with the Bible, the Philosophy of Religion, the Christian Religion, Religious Education, Comparative Religion, and similar subjects. For the general direction of university churches and chapels and the exercising of a broad pastoral ministry other appointments have been made.

Robert Russell Wicks became Dean of Princeton's new chapel in the autumn of 1928, and Charles Whitney Gilkey of Chicago University's new chapel in the same year. Each of these men resigned strong parishes to take up his new work. We have in this volume Dean Wicks' opening sermon at Princeton. Willard L. Sperry, as Chairman of the Harvard Board of Preachers, has direction of the chapel services at Harvard. Roy Bullard Chamberlin is Fellow in Religion and Chapel Director at Dartmouth. Arthur Lee Kinsolving is chaplain at Amherst in addition to being Rector of the local Episcopal Church. Joseph H. Twichell is college pastor at Williams, James M. Yard is Director of Religious Activities at Northwestern, A. C. Wickenden has administrative responsibility for religion at Miami, W. G. Chanter is chaplain at Wesleyan, and the

present writer has been under appointment as University Pastor at Yale since 1927. There are similar appointees elsewhere, and this group has been mentioned simply to suggest the growing consciousness on the part of the academic institution itself of responsibility in the field of religion, and especially of worship.

The growing readiness to accept this responsibility was shown when in the winter of 1928 eighty-one universities and colleges and eighteen preparatory schools sent representatives to the Conference on "Religion in the Colleges" held at Princeton. Fifty-eight university and college presidents attended, thirty vice presidents or deans, sixty-eight faculty members, fourteen headmasters, and eighteen masters.

In the preparation of this volume I have been indebted for suggestions and counsel to several of the contributors, and to others besides. It is an honour to be associated in some slight way with this company of men whose chief joy it is to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to a generation that has upon its hands the building of a new world. To them I would express my sincere thanks.

ELMORE MCNEILL MCKEE.

Yale University,
January, 1929.

THE BASIS OF MORAL OBLIGATION

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

MINISTER OF THE PARK AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH,
NEW YORK CITY

Twice a Sunday the prophetic voice of Harry Emerson Fosdick is heard by great New York congregations, and thousands more "tune in" on the radio. Dr. Fosdick is America's foremost preacher, and has contributed to her religious life a fearless, dynamic leadership. Students flock to hear him because he shows himself in touch with their thinking.

Dr. Fosdick is a scholar and theologian, as his books *The Meaning of Faith* and *The Modern Use of the Bible* testify; a prophet and social reformer as shown in his *Christianity and Progress*, and in his leadership in the war against war; a teacher, as his large classes in Practical Theology at Union Seminary well know. In ecclesiastical circles he is a pioneer. He has served both Baptist and Presbyterian churches, and in the new Riverside Church he will minister to people of all communions, including students from many educational institutions.

Dr. Fosdick was born in Buffalo in 1878. He graduated from Colgate in 1900 and from Union Seminary in 1904. He was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Montclair from 1904 to 1915, and then became minister of the First Presbyterian Church of New York City, and at the same time Professor of Practical Theology in Union Seminary. In 1926 he became minister of the Park Avenue Baptist Church.

He served as Lyman Beecher Lecturer at Yale in 1924. He received the degree of M.A. from Columbia in 1908; D.D. from New York University, Brown, Yale, Glasgow, Princeton, and Union University; LL.D. from Michigan and Rochester; S.T.D. from Ohio University. He is the author of such well-known books as *The Manhood of the Master; The Assurance of Immortality; The Meaning of Prayer; The Meaning of Faith; The Meaning of Service; Christianity and Progress; Twelve Tests of Character; The Modern Use of the Bible;* and *A Pilgrimage to Palestine.*

THE BASIS OF MORAL OBLIGATION

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

LET us approach our thought by noting how many people hold a disheartened attitude toward their religion, as though it were an endeavour after an impossibly ideal life. Say what we will, for example, about the inspiring influence of Jesus, it still remains true that for many he can become an occasion for acute discouragement. To be sure, he is ideal, but look at him! Here we are; there he is. He is a long way up; a chasmed height divides. In consequence, multitudes spend their lives looking wistfully at the religious life through a haze of unreality.

When first I saw Japan's sacred mountain, Fujiyama, it appeared to be unattached to the earth. We drew in from the west toward the Island Empire with the land low-lying on the horizon, and there, high in the heavens, emerging from the clouds as though it floated unanchored and unbased, was the shining crest of Fujiyama. It was ethereal, unearthly, celestial. Anyone

would agree that it was beautiful—a fairyland, unattached to and unattainable from the solid ground.

Many people so regard the religious life. They come to church occasionally to see it from a distance. It is the ideal that shines over their actual. It is what they ought to be haunting what they are.

Manifestly, a sharp contrast distinguishes this prevalent attitude from early Christianity. The word "ideal" does not even occur in the New Testament, and the word "ought" as indicating an ideal is used with surprising infrequency. The emphasis of the New Testament is not prevalently upon the ideality of the Christian life. At the beginning the gospel was primarily a message not about what we ought to be but about what we are. "Now *are* we,"—"Now are we the sons of God."

Let us clarify this matter by a parable. Suppose that a horticulturist should come to a crab apple tree and say, "You ought not to bear crab apples, you should bear astrakhans." The ideal might strongly appeal to the tree. The thought of bearing astrakhans might haunt its conscience and imagination, but what is the use of talking to a crab apple tree about bearing

astrakhans? It is an impossible "ought." Suppose, however, that another and wiser horticulturist should come and say, "You have quite misunderstood yourself; you are an astrakhan apple tree—that is what you are; why are you acting like a crab apple tree when you are an astrakhan?" You see, if that were true, it would get at the root of the matter.

This is the too frequently forgotten approach of the Christian Gospel. It does not start by saying, "You ought, you ought!" It starts by saying, "You are." You are a son of God, and then you ought because you are.

You never can tell what anything ought to do until you know what it is. If an untutored savage from the wilderness could have seen that first commercial dirigible from Europe come over New York City, and if you had asked him what a thing like that ought to do, the untutored savage would have been utterly at a loss. He could not have told you what it ought to do because he would have had no idea what it was. Only when you know what anything is can you tell what it should be expected to do.

At this present juncture of affairs in our generation's moral life, this insistence on founding the "ought" on the "are" is especially pertinent.

Many people are making a swift escape from the urgency and cogency of the word "ought." It becomes a stranger to their vocabulary and an alien in their life. It means subjection to a code, they say, subservience to a tradition. "Ought? Who gave this tyrant to rule over us and spoil the free play of our spontaneous desires?" To which some of us would say, "You are quite at liberty to rid yourselves of every shred of moral obligation except that which inevitably arises out of what you are. But there, not simply in the name of religion but of science you will face an unescapable moral responsibility." We *ought* in accordance with what we *are*.

Manifestly the proof of this pudding is in the eating. Let us get to our illustrations and, starting at the far end, away from the intimacies of our personal life, let us see how this truth operates.

It is commonly said that we ought to be internationally minded, that we ought to leave behind us the parochialism of our old-style nationalism and coöperatively organize the world for peace. Over against this conception stand many people, some of them in America, who say, "That is a grand ideal but it is a dream; it is the way Fujiyama looked—ethereal, unearthly; you never

can outlaw war; you are impractical campaigners for an impossible fairyland." To which some of us would remark that so far from being primarily idealistic, the internationally minded are distinguished by their realism. It is the parochially minded who are living in remote isolation from the facts. We ought to be internationally minded and internationally organized because we are international.

My friend answered the desk phone this last week and a familiar voice, as clear as though it came from the next room, said, "This is so and so speaking from Geneva, Switzerland." We are international.

When some of you go home this noon and look about the apartment, consider the facts. Where did the linoleum on your kitchen floor come from? Very probably the Hindus raised the jute, the Algerians cut the cork, the Argentinians grew the linseed for the oil. It took Asia, Africa, and South America to put that linoleum on your floor.

You answer the telephone. Where did the telephone come from? Japanese silk, Indian mica, Malay rubber, Irish flax, Russian platinum, Egyptian cotton, South African gold—those are a few of the items.

You turn on the electric light. Where did the electric light come from? Greenland, Germany, China, India, Spain, East Indies, Brazil, and Chile—all are represented in one electric light.

Pick up a simple utensil like a steel knife. It requires forty different commodities from fifty-seven different countries to manufacture steel in the United States.

You listen in on the radio. The ingredients that go into the making of a single radio set come from such far dissevered lands that it has been estimated that altogether they travel 250,000 miles from their places of origin to the factory where they are assembled.

So one could go on from humble things like brushes, whose bristles come from China and Japan, to the food upon your table, that comes from everywhere. What if, as you enter your apartment this afternoon, every item there should cry out, each in the native tongue of the land from which it comes! Babel would be simple compared with that. We are international, and then we *ought* because we are.

Try the application of this truth in another realm. Many people to-day are rightly disturbed about the situation in our American family life and are vehemently protesting in favour of

monogamy with strong emphasis upon its obligatory aspects. "It is our duty to be monogamous," they say; "it is our duty to keep the seventh commandment; it is wicked to be sexually unconventional; we ought to hold to the old codes." Upon the other side you will see many youths in impatient rebellion. "The old codes be scrapped!" says the youth; "we will be experimental and adventurous in the sexual realm as elsewhere; why should the dead hand of an obsolete marriage tradition impede the free exercise of our self-expression?" To which some of us would say, "Let us get down to basic facts. What we ought to do depends on what we are." What are we? If we are polygamous, if that is where the deep secrets of human satisfaction lie, then we ought to act that way. But even history will not support that. Always polygamy has turned out in the end, as in Turkey to-day, to be an excursive by path that has led back to the main road—monogamy. Scholars say that from primitive man on that has been true.

As for your private life, what is it that you would rather have than anything else in the world? You young man or woman, free, unconventional, unfettered by codes, what would you rather have than anything else in the world? Quit pretending!

Own up! In your secret love fancies what do you dream of as the greatest possible good? Any normal person can tell. You would like sometime to fall in love with someone who will return your love, so that you two may enter into an intimate relationship which neither of you would want anybody else to invade. You would like to have this relationship publicly recognized in marriage, so that all the world may know that you two belong to each other, and then you would like to have children, so that your love life might flow over into other lives that you have brought into the world. As the years pass and you grow older and the sex life naturally retreats into the background, you would like to have affection there to take its place, a great affection that grows up within the sex relationship and stays after the scaffolding has been taken down. And if life brings you to old age together, you would like to have one die not too long before the other, that there may not be too many years to wait. You would rather have that than anything else in the world.

You, rebellious youth, are very monogamous. Even if you act as though you were not, even when you sell this ideal for a mess of licentious pottage, that only makes the more vividly

manifest in your conscience how monogamous you are. For you know that you have been throwing away something that you really would rather have had than the cheap substitute.

Moreover, all this is psychologically based. The reason for it is that the only complete sex experience is this of which I have been speaking. You say you propose to have a complete sex experience. So say I—a complete sex experience: romance, marriage, children, deepening affection, spiritual kinship—the only complete sex experience. Anything else is truncation, caricature, perversion, or catastrophe.

Do not misunderstand me. I know how difficult it is to attain this. I know how many miss it. Strange, is it not, that it is so hard for us to live in accordance with what we are! It is hard for us to live so internationally. It is hard for us to live so sexually. Some of us older people will do anything we can to help you of the younger generation in your present difficulties. If for economic reasons you are unable to found an old-fashioned family, and are wondering whether you must wait five years or ten years, through professional study or a slow start in business, before a home is possible, do not wait for an old-fashioned home; found a new-fashioned one.

Get married as soon as you sensibly can, even if both of you have to work, and if you cannot afford to have children those first years do not have them until you can. But do not suppose that such new ways of getting into the family life, made necessary by new circumstances, are recommended because of lack of interest in monogamy. It is just because monogamy is so indispensable that we should help young people to marry before it is too late.

And all this conservative attitude toward the family is not code, not tradition, not the dead hand of the past. You *are* monogamous, and because you are you *ought.*

If, now, we have our truth fairly afoot, let us come inside ourselves for its crowning application.

"Now are we the sons of God," says the New Testament. Of course, calling us the sons of God, like many another Hebrew-Christian way of putting things, is a metaphor. Put into our western language it means that we are essentially spiritual beings; that the powers that make us personalities with capacities of thought, purpose, and love are not the fortuitous concourse of self-organizing matter, but are the revelation of an eternal Spirit; that we have a divine heritage, a divine nature, and a divine possibility.

If that Christian doctrine about what we are is not true, then there is no use talking about the Christian ethic as an ideal. We are under no obligation whatever to act in contradiction to what we are. A hen ought not to swim or a rabbit to lay eggs. We *ought* in accordance with what we *are*. If we are beasts, then we ought to act that way. If we are machines, helplessly driven from behind, with no capacity for self-direction, then we should act that way. If we are the sons of God, then we ought to act that way. All duty rests back on doctrine. What are we?

Religious people have always maintained that religion is necessary to morality. But they have maintained it in ways that often have made the claim a laughing stock to the intelligent, so that many to-day, in reaction against it, are saying, "We do not need religion to make us good." Old-time defenders of the faith, for example, used to say that unless men believed in the traditional heaven and hell they would not live decently. That will not do! Old defenders of the faith used to say that unless people believed that the moral law was supernaturally handed down, dictated by God, people would not keep it. "Goodness," they said, "requires the weight of supernatural authority." That sort of statement

runs off the minds of some of us like water from a roof. Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not commit adultery—such laws well up out of the necessities of human life, the coherence of society depends upon them, and they do not need to be validated by any theory of supernatural dictation. They are validated by the immediate facts. In consequence, many folk, unable to see any sense in the old ways of claiming that religion is indispensable to morality, are beginning to say that religion has no necessary contribution to make. But it has. It has for this basic reason of which we are speaking. What we ought to do always rests back on what we are. What are we?

What are we, for example, from a frankly irreligious point of view? We are temporary and fortuitous aggregations of self-organizing material elements. We have no spiritual heritage and no spiritual destiny. According to one of the most popular schools of thought to-day what we call our soul is indissolubly associated with our larynx, because we are simply animals that have learned to talk, and all our mental and spiritual aspects were born in our windpipes. As for what we are against the cosmic background, one devotee has recently put it with charming candour.

Man, he says, is "a small but boisterous bit of the organic scum that for the time being coats part of the surface of one small planet." That is frank, but on the irreligious basis it is true. We are a small but boisterous bit of organic scum.

Suppose, now, that we all should begin thinking so about ourselves in earnest. Professor Hocking of Harvard in his last book uses a penetrating and unforgettable phrase. "There is a deep tendency in human nature," he says, "to *become like* that which we imagine ourselves to be." Who can exaggerate, then, the importance of what we think we are? Organic scum—that on one side, and on the other the deep tendency in human nature to become like what we imagine ourselves to be!

One of the most amazing human documents of this generation is Clifford Beer's *A Mind That Found Itself*. Do you remember that story? A sensitive lad, an older brother with epilepsy, the dread terror striking in on the younger boy that he may become an epileptic, too, a terror so dreadful that he does not dare to speak about it to anyone but broods upon it in morbid and melancholy solitude until it begins within his imagination to take on the shape and form of the actual. See him sitting there in the classrooms of

Yale University with this freezing horror at his heart: "I am an epileptic." "Doomed to what I then considered a living death," he writes, "I thought of epilepsy, I dreamed epilepsy, until thousands of times during the six years that this disquieting idea persisted, my overwrought imagination seemed to drag me to the very verge of an attack." You remember the consequence—three years in an insane asylum. Yet Clifford Beers has come back again. How close a call it was, however, for he was in the grip of that deep tendency in human nature to become like that which you imagine yourself to be!

Who, then, can overestimate what the Christian doctrine means, that we are the sons of God? Say it to yourself. Make it the rallying cry of your life. You are a son of God, and because you are, you ought.

Go on, now, to note that quite apart from any theoretical arguments against the behaviouristic psychology or the mechanistic philosophy, it does look as though this irreligious understanding of human personality not only will not do but is not true.

In France this summer an impressive thing happened. A man named Pierre Cayre was a hero of the Great War. All these years his name

has been engraved among the heroic dead upon the monument at Monbahus. His courage under fire had been extolled in many a war oration and among the villagers of his native town he walked in memory like a king. And this man, Pierre Cayre, whose shining reputation was safe beyond harm, gave himself up this summer. He was not dead but alive. He had not been a hero but a deserter. He was not a king but a coward. Why should a man act like that? Nobody knew. No one could harm him. Ten years had made him safe, but he could not live with a lie. He had tried it for a decade and he could not go on. His wife would fall from loftiest pride in him to deepest shame; his friends who had called him blessed would curse his memory; his secure and shining reputation would be blasted. Every practical argument was against confession but he could not live with a lie. You know, it is strange that organic scum should act like that.

There is something deeper than that in us. We are sons of God and, in the literal sense of the word, that is an awful thing to be. For when a man is a son of God and tries to live as though he were something else, the consequences are terrific. See these sons of God living sensually, selfishly, meanly. They never quite get away with it.

Always there is an inner perdition, because when a man is one thing and lives as though he were another, that is not breaking a code, nor disobeying a law, nor being rebellious against a tradition; that is violating oneself.

You young man or woman here, trying to live as though you were not a child of God, you cannot permanently go on happily living on a lie.

Finally, the positive and constructive truth about this matter is that living out from and up to what you really are is the radiant and powerful motive for goodness. Some of these modern cults, like Christian Science and New Thought, have rather badly put it over on us of the old-line churches. There was, I fear, an undue streak of Puritanism in our Protestant tradition and one consequence is that a great deal of our Protestant preaching has at its centre the word "ought." You ought, you ought—duty, responsibility, obligation—you ought! And suddenly these new cults rose up and began saying, "You *are!* You are well; realize it. You are divine; live up to it. You are a son of God; act it. You *are!*" They were taking in earnest that deep tendency in human nature to become like that which one imagines himself to be. To be sure, I have plenty of disagreements with these modern cults, some

of them very serious, but never let your disagreement blind you to the sound stuff that makes them float.

The basic element in the Christian Gospel is the doctrine about what we are. Say it to yourselves: "I am a son of God." Make it the rallying cry of your lives: "I am a son of God." Put it at the centre of your habitual thinking and your daily living: "I am a son of God." Live out from it and up to it. Claim your heritage. It is health and peace and moral driving power, and you young people in particular, living in a generation when there are so many cheap ideas of what we are, turn from them as you would from the black plague. You are a son of God—and because you are, you ought.

Prayer

Eternal God, we beseech Thee that Thou wilt lay hold with Thy Spirit on the consciences of some of us who have worshipped here this day. Help us to entertain a noble opinion of ourselves. Thou seest on what ideas concerning our own nature we have been trying to live. Save us, we beseech Thee, from living on lies. Help us to recognize the truth about ourselves, and so lift us into a Christian self-respect. Make us worthy of this high vocation, that we should be called Thy Sons. Amen.

THE RIVER OF LIFE

WILLARD L. SPERRY

DEAN OF THE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL IN
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

When Dean Willard L. Sperry's *Reality in Worship* was published a few years ago, it was quickly acclaimed as one of the best interpretations of the meaning of worship in modern times that we have. It is a deeply spiritual book that shows how the intense current demand for reality builds a solid foundation for the place of worship in a community. Dean Sperry's preaching, like this book, shows that he understands our religious inheritance and the contemporary mind as well, and that he has become one of the most gifted interpreters of our present religious situation. His sermons possess a high literary quality, both in form and in the material out of literature which he uses. It is not difficult to understand why he has been chosen chairman of the Harvard Board of Preachers and is in demand in a score of academic communities. The sermon submitted for this book is an interesting study of homiletical method, showing how one bold metaphor may be sustained throughout a whole sermon and developed from the concrete story or point of departure.

Dean Sperry was born in Peabody, Massachusetts, in 1882. He received his B.A. from Olivet College in 1903, and B.A. from Oxford in 1907 as a Rhodes Scholar. He was ordained to the Congregational ministry in 1908, became assistant pastor of the First Church of Fall River, Massachusetts, and in 1913 became pastor. He was pastor of the Central Church, Boston, from 1914 to 1922, and Lecturer and Professor of Practical Theology at Andover Seminary from 1917 to 1925. He became Dean of the Theological School in Harvard University and Professor of Practical Theology in 1922, which post he now occupies.

He has received the degree of M.A. from Yale and Oxford, and of D.D. from Yale and Amherst. He is author of *The Disciplines of Liberty*, *Reality in Worship*, *The Paradox of Religion*, and *The Divine Reticence*.

THE RIVER OF LIFE

WILLARD L. SPERRY

All the rivers run into the sea; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.
—Ecclesiastes 1:7.

In the year 1840 David Livingstone landed from England at Capetown. The map of central Africa was at that time a blank. Livingstone said of his aim as a missionary explorer, "I shall open up a path to the interior or perish."

Ten years later, still faithful to that purpose, he stepped out of the bush at the heart of the continent onto the edge of the Zambesi River, which rolled there a mile wide past the villages upon its shore. The natives had a canoe song, which, for immemorial generations, they had sung of their river:

"The Zambesi! Nobody knows
Whence it comes and whither it goes."

Livingstone could not be content with that comfortable agnosticism. He gave the remaining

twenty years of his life to surveying the watersheds and working out the river systems of the central African plateau. This arduous work won for him the name by which he is still remembered among the native tribes—"The Seeker of Rivers." When death finally overtook him on the 30th of April in 1873, at Chitambo's village in Ilala, he was working north along the banks of a great and unknown river which he supposed to be "the fountains of Herodotus," the headwaters of the Nile. But all this seemed very strange to the black men. King Cazembe said to Livingstone, "We let the streams run on, and do not ask whence they rise or whither they flow."

Every man of us comes to the moment when he stands gazing thoughtfully at the moving and mysterious river of life. He hears the plaintive song of human perplexity coming over its tides,

> "The river of life! Nobody knows
> Whence it comes or whither it goes."

Careless men, thoughtless men, are content to float upon its surface for a little while without asking to know its origins and its destiny. But thoughtful men become, like Livingstone, Seek-

ers of Rivers. Some inner compulsion forces them to try to map out the river system of human nature and human society. They wish to know where life begins and where it ends, and it is the business of education and religion to further them in their quest.

It is unnecessary to remind you that the obvious and conventional method of trying to discover what life means is to follow life to its sources and to interpret it in the terms of its origins. Would you know what human nature and character are? Go back into the hinterland of instinct and animal behaviour. Would you know what states and churches and kindred human institutions mean? Read the truth of them in the folkways of aborigines, the movements of the herd, the organization of the hunting pack. Read biology, anthropology, and the newer psychology. These disciplines will reduce man to his simplest and lowest terms, and ridding him of all that is irrelevant and accidental, will tell you the truth about him.

The up-stream country which is discovered to you by these sciences with the backward look is a wild and forbidding place. The farther you go into this world of human beginnings the more savage the scene becomes. All around you is

heard from half-human throats "the yelp of the beast." Religious creeds, codes of decent morality, all the stuff of modern faith and conduct, disappear in irrational and brutal customs of aborigines who seem unable to distinguish between truth and falsehood, right and wrong. Back of all the mountains on which beatitudes and decalogues were preached you come upon a naked savage kneeling in a panic of fright before a basalt rock, or upon a wild tribe celebrating in lascivious orgies the fertility of nature. In the place of moral heroes and martyrs for truth's sake you have a lewd and cruel being, who spent his life hunting, idling, gnawing bones, lusting, and fighting. This, says the remorseless science which has led you thus far, is what man resolves himself into when you factor out the irrational and irrelevant decencies which constitute that disease known as civilization. This is the original truth of man: this is the permanent and important truth of man. As man has been, so he is and shall be. Man was ever a fighter and a satyr, so one fight and one fling more.

The witness of the ape and the tiger in our own members contributes, under certain conditions, to the testimony of these sciences of human

origins. "When hunger begins to gnaw at the stomach of the explorer," said Stanley, "the nature of the animal comes out, as a tortoise head, projected from the shell, discloses the animal within. Despite education and breeding, the white man is seldom more than twenty-four hours ahead of his black brother, and barely one hundred hours in advance of the cannibal; and ten thousand years hence it will be just the same." August, 1914, can have summoned to its stern service few more sensitive men than Fritz Kreisler, but it is this supreme artist who wrote of his *Four Weeks in the Trenches*, "It is extraordinary how quickly suggestions of luxury, culture, refinement, are forgotten. Centuries drop from one, and one becomes a primeval man, nearing the cave-dweller in an incredibly short time." Apparently one such month could undo in the most refined natures of our time ten thousand years of history and a hundred thousand years of human evolution.

In this sobered and disillusioned mood one turns from the verdict of science and the witness of experience to face this mysterious river of life. You take your stand in Piccadilly of a summer night with William Ernest Henley and you con-

sent to his profession of faith in ancient paganism old and yet ever new:

"Here, in this radiant and immortal street,
Pan, the bountiful and imperious Pan,
Still reigns and triumphs.
A tidal race of lust from shore to shore,
The shameless elemental mirth,
The lewd perennial overmastering spell,
Which keeps the rolling universe ensphered,
Wanton and wondrous and forever well."

You have now forsaken, in the interests of the truth, all of the inspiration and consolation of religion, all of the conventional restraints of current morality. With the passing of the mystery of life, now known in its origins, has gone also much of its wonder and glory. There is no longer any beauty of holiness that you should desire either the religion or the morals of your environment. These, you have been told, are the sentimental protection which weak natures have devised to cover their fears and cowardice. You believe your clear and pitiless realism to be both more honest and more brave. You have discovered the authentic, imperious, ineradicable stuff that makes a man. You have made your submission to the irresistible forces which flood through him, and may not be denied. You have a perfect

knowledge which casts out fear, because you have seen man in his primeval strength, naked, unashamed, and unalterable.

I do not know how far all this may represent a real problem in your lives, but you have been more than usually immune from the major spirit which inspires most of our fiction and drama and art, as well as certain of our sciences, if you have not at times been forced to conclude that religion and morality, as we now know them, are mistaken efforts to tell lies rather than the truth about man, efforts which must end in futility and frustration. The business of knowing human nature in the terms of its origins is one which requires an initial courage and ends often in a kind of spiritual disillusionment and cynicism. Even the strongest natures do not return from this adventure without saying,

"'It is not now as it hath been of yore,
I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.'"

In so far as I have tried to sketch boldly and with strong colours, but I hope not unfairly, a situation in which many of us find ourselves in

this generation I have raised the question, "What has religion to say to all this?"

Religion has three things to say.

First: Any religion which is to command the respect of thinking men will not deny or prohibit the right of sober science to discover what man came from.

There is a timid and cowardly faith abroad which goes about wringing its hands with apprehension whenever any explorer of these matters turns his face to the dark backward and abysm of time from which we came. They say that it is dangerous to faith to go too far and to stay too long in that fever-cursed jungle of primeval things. I have on my desk a letter from one such frightened soul who says, "I was confirmed by Bishop X and I wish to say that I regard all attempts to dig into the origins of the Old Faith as absolutely futile. The creeds have always been the final appeal of the Church and there is nothing to be gained by disturbing a man's religious faith because there is nothing new to be discovered."

Those statements were prompted by doubt rather than faith, and witness to fear rather than conviction. That man was intellectually afraid of what may happen when we begin to ask hard

honest questions. With that temper no religion that is worthy the name or that is to endure, can stop to parley. If that is religion, then many of us must choose irreligion. It is precisely because we do not believe that religion requires any such temper that, in the name of religion, we will go anywhere with any honest man who is trying to find the true answer to a valid question.

Further, we will not try to whitewash the answer with platitudes or dash over it the rose water of sentimentalism. We will leave the facts as we find them, we will not lie about them. We shall discover, with Huxley, that truth is not much affected by our likes and dislikes and we will let the truth stand on its own feet. If we do not like what we find, no matter—it is to our best knowledge the truth and it will prevail.

Second: None of these sciences with the backward look ever takes away the ultimate mystery of life. The greatest scientists know this best, and are uniformly modest men. "The vulgar belief," says Sir Arthur Thomson, "that science has explained everything is a hopeless misunderstanding."

All human thinking is compelled at last to give a name to the primitive residual Mystery that remains when we have done our best to under-

stand life and the world. Instinct, Electricity, the Ether—these are names which have been given to aspects of the infinite Mystery. We know no more what they mean or all that they mean than we know what we mean when we say, "God." Science gets on with its work by naming the mystery, by giving it a notation in the hard equation of life. But science has not yet succeeded in eliminating the unknowns from that equation.

When, then, you have gone back as far as human inquiry can take you there is still a Beyond. Our inquiries explain many things, but no matter how thorough and relentless, they have not explained all things. Regarding the ultimate problem of the origin of life every great thinker is still an "agnostic"—the technical way of saying that he does not know.

Third: Religion says that although life has a backward look it has also a forward look, and that when you are trying to find out the truth of human life, the look ahead is on the whole more important and revealing than the look back. A man's hopes and plans and purposes are probably a better definition of his true self than his memories. This is as true of the race as of the individual

Livingstone found the sources of most of the great rivers which originate in central Africa. But he had not found the whole truth of them, even as he watched the first drop of rain trickling down a watershed. Back of the rivulet was the clouds, back of the clouds the sea. And it was a fine intuition of the symbolic truth of his quest which in his last years turned him down stream to the far-off mouth of each of his rivers, to the ocean at its end.

If we were to press this parable of physical geography we should begin by defending the thesis that the truth of what a river is and of its source is to be learned only at its mouth, and we should then go on to say that man's imperfect character and primitive nature are to be understood in the light of his conscious direction and chosen destiny. This perhaps is what the wise man of old meant when he said, "All rivers run into the sea; unto the place from whence rivers come, thither they return."

William James used to say, as a sober psychologist, "Origins prove nothing." He was thinking of the power of the human mind and will to direct life to ends which often give the lie to origins. To the statement, worn threadbare, that you cannot change human nature, one of William

James's successors in his department answers, "It is human nature to change itself."

If this were not so, how are we to account for facts which we see all about us? Your picture of the savage frenzy of primeval religious orgies will account for many of the dark rites which Livingstone must have overseen in the African jungle, but there is one item in that landscape which your theory of religion as the survival of magic does not explain, and that is David Livingstone himself. In the end you must give some account of how and why there came to be a man like that, one who, in the words of that slab in the nave of Westminster Abbey, laid down his life for his friends, that he might explore the undiscovered secrets and abolish the desolating slave trade of central Africa, that open sore of his world.

Your theory that all morality reduces itself to the permutations and combinations of the instinct of self-preservation, and that every act of unselfishness is simply selfishness in conscious or an unconscious disguise, is an insult to the memory of those men who twenty years ago courted and wed death in a hospital in Cuba to prove a bold hypothesis as to the transmission of yellow fever.

Your dogma that fear is the motive power of religion and ethics is a slander upon the life and death of Mallory, the master at Charterhouse, and Irvine, the Oxford blue, who elected "to go all out" on the summit of Mount Everest.

Without denying anything that truth-seekers find and truth-tellers say about the unpromising beginnings of human life, its already demonstrated facts are beyond those origins and often strangely and nobly different from them. For there is another truth to be told, and that is this,

"thou hast great allies,
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind."

The goal toward which our steady minds and strong wills are set is, therefore, far more the truth of us than our unlovely and unpromising origins. These sources cannot be denied and up to a point they condition our adventure, but they do not wholly define it or determine it. All through the New Testament there is this forward look as the substance of the Christian life. Paul was willing to forget the things that were behind, not because they were untrue, but because they were inadequate. He set his face to run the race that was before him, which had as its goal his

high calling in Christ Jesus. He would have said, in our day, what Matheson, the blind preacher and poet, said, that he had never come up with Jesus, modern as he was.

So it is that John Stuart Mill, in giving a rule for life, gave also a definition of life for those who call themselves Christians: he could find no better rule for living than this—so to live that Christ might approve of one's motives. But that definition will be found only by those who believe that the truth of life lies in what is before them even more than in what is behind them.

Let us end our story where it began. Livingstone left unsolved the problem of the lower reaches of the Lualaba River, and this problem Henry M. Stanley received as a trust and obligation from his predecessor. Was it the Niger, the Congo, or the Nile?

He asked the oldest, wisest black man on the spot where this river went. "It flows north." "And then?" "It flows north." "And then?" "Still north. I tell you it flows north, and north, and north, and there is no end to it."

On the 22d of November, 1876, he set out with thirty-six people on the ebbing tide of that river. A shore relief company followed him on the banks. Many of his company were killed by cannibals,

others were drowned. His river went north and north, as the black man said. He discovered and negotiated Stanley Falls and came into Stanley Pool. As he journeyed his river began to swing north by west, northwest, west, and at last southwest. For fifteen hundred miles he followed it until, on the 12th of August, 1877, he saw the Congo, seven miles wide, empty itself into the South Atlantic. Then he knew the whole truth of what had been to Livingstone an imperfect half-truth. Then the natives gave him his name; they called him the Breaker of the Path. And at home they wrote a verse about him:

"Large shall his name be writ, with that strong line,
Of heroes, martyrs, soldiers, saints, who gave
Their lives to chart the waste, and free the slave,
In the dim Continent where his beacons shine.

And far away his monument shall be,
In the wide lands he opened to the light,
By the dark Forest of the tropic night,
And his great River winding to the sea."

Prayer

We humbly pray Thee, O Father in heaven, to guide us through the darkness of this world, to

guard us from its perils, to hold us up and strengthen us when we grow weary in our mortal way; and to lead us by Thy chosen paths, through time and through death, to our eternal home in Thy heavenly kingdom; which we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE WORLD IS YOURS

ERNEST FREMONT TITTLE

MINISTER OF THE FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

A STUDENT of Northwestern said of Dr. Ernest Fremont Tittle, "We are conscious of no mental let-down when we attend his church." Here is a preacher at the doors of a university campus, whose large church is packed Sunday after Sunday by a congregation that includes great numbers of students, who find in him one who speaks to them on as high an intellectual plane as do the university lecturers. Added to his clarity of thought is his social fearlessness and an unwavering passion for Jesus Christ. His contribution to this book is a characteristic one and illustrates what Dr. Rall said in reviewing Dr. Tittle's book *The Religion of the Spirit:* "Here is a mind open to all the fresh winds of the spirit that move through our modern world. Here is a note of reality in a man who will not accept what he cannot make his own in understanding and conviction. Here is a refusal to think vaguely or speak obscurely. Here is the unrelenting demand for the fitting word, at once a mark of intellectual honesty and the foundation of a good style."

Dr. Tittle was born in Springfield, Ohio, in 1885. He graduated from Ohio Wesleyan in 1906, and later from Drew Seminary. He has held Methodist pastorates in Christiansburg, Dayton, Delaware, and Columbus, Ohio, and has been minister of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Evanston, Illinois, since 1918, at the same time serving on the faculty of Garrett Biblical Institute. He preaches in the colleges of the east and middle west and is author of *What Must the Church Do to Be Saved?* and *The Religion of the Spirit.*

THE WORLD IS YOURS

ERNEST FREMONT TITTLE

THERE is a brief passage in one of the letters of St. Paul about which I have long wanted to speak, but never had the courage to do so; and I frankly confess that even now my courage is none too good. I could easily wish that I had chosen another text, for this haunting message is either sublime sense or utter nonsense, and although I am personally convinced that it is the former, not the latter, I am not at all sure that I shall be able to put up a good argument in support of my conviction.

Let me hasten to explain that my fear is not for the reputation of St. Paul, which is assuredly far beyond any power which I possess to add or detract; nor is it for your power of discernment, for which I have learned to entertain a very profound respect. What I fear is that I, myself, may fail to prove adequate as an interpreter of a saying that is at once greatly true and greatly daring. For, to a little handful of Corinthian Christians among whom, as he himself so frankly

stated, there were not many intellectuals, not many social leaders, not many persons with pedigrees, St. Paul said this: "All belongs to you; Paul, Apollos, Cephas, the world, life, death, the present, and the future—all belongs to you; and you belong to Christ, and Christ to God."[1] And it was exactly as though Mr. E. Stanley Jones should stand to-day in some unfashionable quarter of the city of Calcutta, and say to a humble handful of Indian Christians, "All belongs to you; St. Francis of Assisi, Martin Luther, John Wesley, England, France, America, Germany, yesterday, to-day, to-morrow—all belongs to you; and you belong to Christ, and Christ to God." And if any modern missionary should say something like that, would he not be talking utter nonsense? Or would he, perhaps, be talking sublime sense?

There are, in the English language, two words which are worth studying with the help of any good dictionary—the word "own" and the word "possess." On first thought it might appear that they are quite interchangeable, that to own is to possess, to possess is to own, and that's that. But on reflection you discover that between these nearly synonymous words there is, after all, a

[1] I Cor. 3:21–23.

striking difference. You may possess certain things which you do not, and indeed cannot, own. You may, for instance, possess contentment, but can you own it? You may, perchance, possess intelligence, but is intelligence something to which you could claim any sole or legal title? You may, if you are fortunate, possess the respect of your fellows, but could you patent it, or copyright it, and receive royalties from it? According to a usage which to-day is rare, but still permissible, it might be said concerning some of you that you possess English literature, or German philosophy, or American history. But surely you could not monopolize it by any process legal or illegal. There are, it appears, some things which a man may possess but never own.

There are also things which a man may own and not possess. He may, for example, own a great library, and yet never possess it in the sense of being able to read and enjoy a single volume it contains. He may have on his wall a great painting, for which he has paid a fabulous sum, and of which he has obtained for a few brief years a sort of legal ownership; and yet, for all that, he may not possess it in the sense of being able to appreciate it.

There is, then, this difference between owner-

ship and possession: ownership is related only to material values; possession is related also to spiritual values. Houses, lands, automobiles, stocks, bonds, first mortgages, second mortgages—such things as these a man may own. The beauty of lakes, the majesty of mountains, the mystery of sunrise, the glory of sunset, the singing of birds, the greenness of trees, the fragrance of flowers, the Sistine Madonna, the Ninth Symphony, *Hamlet*, and *Faust*, and *Les Misérables*, the thoughts of Plato, the poems of Burns, the ballads of Kipling, the sayings of Jesus—such things as these a man may never own but may possess. And if anyone should rise up to remark that the things which a man may never own but may possess are just the greatest things in all the world—well, he would not be very far wrong, would he?

I

Now of course it is perfectly obvious that when St. Paul said to that little handful of First Century Christians, "The world is yours," he was not thinking of ownership. There were many, many things which these poor people did not own and would never own. He was thinking of possession, of certain things which they would

never own but might possess; and of certain still dearer things which no man could own but which men who had in them the spirit of Christ might possess.

He begins by saying, "Paul is yours, and Apollos, and Peter." What does he mean? There is one meaning right on the surface of these words which, in passing, we can hardly afford to overlook. There were, it appears, even in those days, religious factions, although not yet had they developed into great and holy denominations! There was a faction which said, "We are followers of Paul"; another which said, "We are followers of Apollos"; and still another which said, "Your presumptuous Paul is but an upstart, your eloquent Apollos but a bag of wind. Our leader is one of the original Twelve. We are followers of Peter!" Just as to-day there is one religious party which claims John Wesley, and another which claims Martin Luther, and a third which claims all the canonized saints of history and a succession of ecclesiastical leaders reaching back, without a break, to that glorified fisherman of Galilee to whom our Lord himself gave the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven!

But to the sectarians of his own time St. Paul said this: "Why tie yourself up to one man? If

I have anything of value to offer, by all means take it; and if Apollos has anything to offer, take that; and if Peter can give you anything, take that, too." And if Paul were alive to-day, what would he be saying to the sectarians of our time? Do you not think that he would be saying, "Why bind yourself to Martin Luther, or to John Calvin, or to John Wesley, or to George Fox? Why take all your orders from Canterbury or from Rome? The glorious pageantry of the Roman Catholic Church, the beautiful liturgy of the Episcopal Church, the intellectual honesty of the Unitarian Church, the social passion of the Methodist Church, the moral vigour of the Congregational Church, the fine democracy of the Baptist Church, the spiritual insight and moral courage of the Society of Friends—it all belongs to you."

In the face of all the difficulties, real and imaginary, that stand in the way, I am personally convinced that it might all belong to us. Indeed, I am looking forward to a day when it will belong to us. Religious pageantry as beautiful and inspiring as any produced in Rome; an order of worship as impressive and helpful as any followed in Canterbury; an intellectual honesty of which no scientist could feel ashamed; a social

passion such as dwelt in the heart of Wesley and fired the soul of Walter Rauschenbusch; a spiritual insight and moral courage equal to the high and hard demands of a transitional time; the faith of saints; the courage of pioneers; and a mystical awareness of the presence of God—it all belongs to us, or at least might belong to us. And how splendid it would be if you and I should highly resolve that some day it shall belong to us!

II

But is this all that St. Paul intended to say? I do not think that it is. At any rate, his words admit of certain other meanings. Follow for a moment the trail of his suggestion that it is possible for people who are now alive to possess certain great historical characters—say St. Paul himself. Somebody may remark, quite properly, that St. Paul is dead, and has been for nearly nineteen hundred years. How then would it be possible for anyone to possess him? Perhaps you will recall something which I intimated at the start, namely, that this passage is either sublime sense or errant nonsense. Just now it may appear to some of us to be errant nonsense; but only if we are determined to believe that a man is nothing more than a mummy.

It is strictly true to say that St. Paul is dead and has been for centuries. It is also true to say that St. Paul is alive and has been for nearly nineteen hundred years. All of him that was of the earth, earthy, has forever disappeared. Not long ago, newspapers announced in big headlines that a certain English nobleman, with the help of a certain American archæologist, and the connivance of certain pusillanimous Egyptian officials, had obtained possession of the body of an ancient Egyptian king, whose long name was quickly shortened by the American people! The body of St. Paul nobody will ever possess; it is no more. But his spirit—the spirit which projected that frail little body over so many weary miles of land and sea on a mission that has changed the mental and moral climate of half the world; the spirit that overleaped all barriers of race and nation and class and sex; that dictated an Ode of Love which outreaches every other writing of similar character in ancient or modern times, and a chapter on the immortality of the soul so wonderful that even now, nineteen hundred years after its composition, "there is nothing better to be read beside an open grave" —that is alive.

Would it not be true to say that to-day the

spirit of Paul is more alive than it was in that First Century when his body was alive? To his own generation St. Paul was, after all, practically unknown. No single contemporary historian makes any mention of him. In Philippi, and Ephesus, and Corinth, and Rome, there were, to be sure, a few undistinguished persons who either loved him or hated him. But before that great contemporary world of law and politics and military adventure, he passed absolutely unnoticed. Not even on the world of letters did he make any impression. No scholar quoted him. No poet referred to him. And yet there was in this man Paul something that was destined to live after Imperial Rome had crumbled into dust and most of the great names of the First Century had sunk into utter oblivion.

What was the immortal part of St. Paul? In that noble poem which is perhaps the greatest contribution which Frederic W. H. Myers made to his generation and ours, St. Paul is made to say:

"Christ! I am Christ's! and let the name suffice you,
Ay, for me too He greatly hath sufficed:
Lo, with no winning words I would entice you,
Paul has no honour and no friend but Christ.

. . . . .

"Yea thro' life, death, thro' sorrow and thro' sinning
He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed:
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ."

Can anybody have a momentary doubt as to what it was that gave Paul his place in history? Beyond dispute it was his love for Christ, his indomitable determination that Jesus Christ should be crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords in the life of the world.

Now you and I may possess St. Paul. We may possess that in him which gave him his earthly immortality—his love for Christ. And with all the force that I can command—would to God it were greater—I should like this morning to say that in this Twentieth Century we need to possess Paul's love for Christ.

Toward the close of the Nineteenth Century, a distinguished British scholar wrote, "I do not envy those who will have to fight the battle of Christianity in the Twentieth Century." Then, half ashamed, he added, "Yes, perhaps I do, but it will be a stiff fight." Well, it is proving to be a stiff fight, but the stiffest part of it is not what he thought it was going to be. He surmised that in the Twentieth Century Christianity would be

hard put to defend its intellectual assumptions; and so it is. The greatest of all the intellectual assumptions of Christianity is the daring belief that there is, at the heart of everything, an eternal goodness like unto that which appeared in the life of Jesus. In this questioning, skeptical Twentieth Century is that assumption easy to defend? Hardly. But after all it is not the intellectual assumptions of Christianity which are to-day precipitating the stiffest fight. It is the moral assumptions.

There is a Christ in whom millions of people still believe—the Christ of the creeds; a Christ, let it be noted, who makes certain intellectual but no moral demands. Members of our intelligentsia are prone to assume that what stands in the way of Christianity is something intellectual. But what chiefly stands in the way of Christianity is something moral. The Christ in whom millions of people to-day do not believe is the Jesus of history, who was born in a stable; who laid up for himself no treasures upon earth; who went into the world not to get something for himself but to create something for others; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; who, in an hour of extreme danger when his own life was in peril and the lives of his friends also, said to a

militant disciple, "Put up thy sword"; and who died on a cross praying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

In this Twentieth Century the stiffest part of the battle for Christianity is not being fought around the Christ of the creeds, but rather around the Jesus of history, whose attitude toward wealth is to Europeans a stumbling block, to Americans foolishness; and whose attitude toward the sword is the secret shame of a professedly Christian world. And yet, to any discerning mind, is it not perfectly clear that it is precisely the Jesus of history who must capture the allegiance of the multitude of men if civilization is to endure? A generation which with the help of modern science sought first material possessions has had added unto it what? Hunger and nakedness and disease and debt! A generation that took the sword has so nearly perished with the sword that anyone who is not as blind as a mole cannot but realize that the sword must be destroyed. The one hope of a suffering, blundering world is that Jesus of Nazareth may be permitted to rule it. How desirable it is, then, that you and I should come to possess that in St. Paul which gave him his place in history—his recognition of the supreme and everlasting great-

ness of Jesus, and his determination that Christ should be permitted to reign in the life of the world.

Now I have used St. Paul as an illustration of his own thesis that a great human soul, the immortal part of it, may be possessed by others. I should like to use, also, another man much nearer to us in time. There was, of Abraham Lincoln, an immortal part which you and I may possess. And how? Not merely by reading his biographies. Anyone who has read Herndon's *Lincoln*, or Nicolay and Hay's, or Ida Tarbell's, or Lord Charnwood's, or William Barton's, or Carl Sandburg's, or Stevenson's, or that most recent and exceedingly important study of Senator Beveridge, so tragically left uncompleted by his own death—anybody who has read the important "Lives" of Lincoln might, I suppose, and not altogether without reason, say, "This man Lincoln belongs to me. There is not a single important event in his amazing career that is to me unknown. And the books he read, the poetry he loved, the stories he told, his likes and dislikes, the elements of his character, even his personal habits—I know them all. This man Lincoln belongs to me." But when I say that there was, of Abraham Lincoln, an immortal part which

you and I may possess, I am thinking of something vastly more significant and important than any mere acquaintance with the facts of his life, important though that undoubtedly is.

A few years ago a distinguished store published in connection with a perfectly legitimate advertisement an eloquent tribute to Abraham Lincoln in which attention was specifically called to his passion for justice. Yet the management of this store had instructed its sales force to pay no attention to coloured persons who should appear at its counters! And this man who delivered his "House Divided Against Itself" speech in the face of almost certain political defeat—is he not lauded to the skies by politicians whose whole career has been a series of miserable compromises? This man whose life was singularly free from spite and bitterness, who lived and died "with malice toward none, with charity for all"—is he not apotheosized by persons who, in many cases, still hate Germany as he never hated the South? This man who, in his devotion to a great cause, lost sight of self, overlooked the insults of Stanton and the machinations of Chase, endured the insufferable egotism of George McClellan and his ill-concealed contempt for his chief, saying, "I will hold McClellan's horse

for him if only he will give us a victory"—is he not praised by persons who are themselves so small and self-important that any lack of deference, any real or fancied slight, is something which they can never forgive nor forget? Such persons may have read all the "Lives," be acquainted with all the facts, but do they *possess* Abraham Lincoln?

What would it mean really to possess Lincoln? Well, if under conditions such as now exist a young man full of ambition should select some great cause, say the abolition of the liquor traffic, or the outlawry of war, and then, in utter devotion to that cause should persistently subordinate all his personal ambitions, refuse to let himself be embittered by criticism or spoiled by praise, nurse no grievance, harbour no hate, but, with a profound understanding of the human heart and a vast pity for its fears and its follies, should patiently wait for ideas to win their way, and ideals to conquer, never forcing an impossible pace, and never surrendering the chosen goal—such an one would possess the soul of Abraham Lincoln.

III

How suggestive it is, this thought of St. Paul, that we may supplement our own lives, enlarge

and enrich them, by possessing the immortal part of every great life that has ever been lived! Emerson, apparently, had the same thought in mind when he wrote:

"I am the owner of the sphere,
  Of the seven stars and the solar year,
Of Cæsar's hand, and Plato's brain,
  Of Lord Christ's heart, and Shakespeare's
    strain."

Even in the mere contemplation of the great moments of the past a man secures enlargement of soul. Compare the mental outlook of anyone whose reading is confined to daily newspapers and the mental outlook of one who can sit down any day that he chooses to do so with Socrates in an Athenian death cell and hear him say to his sorrowing friends, "Bury me if you can catch me, but I shall be beyond your reach." Or travel with St. Paul amid all the perils he had to face on land and sea and hear the little man murmur, "I can do anything through Him that strengtheneth me." Or stand in the city of Worms with Martin Luther as he declares, "It is both hazardous and dishonourable for a man to act contrary to his own conscience. Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me." Or stand with John

Wesley on his father's tomb in the Epworth churchyard while, to a generation pilloried by Carlyle in the phrase, "Soul extinct; body well alive," he preaches from the text, "The Kingdom of God is not eating or drinking, but righteousness and joy and peace in the Holy Spirit." Or follow the trail blazed by David Livingstone through Darkest Africa amid hunger, and peril, and fever, and pain, and hear him say, "I have never made a sacrifice in my life." Or watch Mazzini as, in his young manhood, he unfurls a banner reading, "For God and Humanity," and holds that banner nobly aloft in his life until the end. Or follow to his last resting place William Wilberforce, the man who saved England from the curse of the slave trade. Or listen to the aged Pasteur at the close of a life dedicated to science and the welfare of mankind, as he advises a group of young collegians, "Say to yourself, first, 'What have I done for my instruction?' and then, as you gradually advance, 'What have I done for my country?' until at last you may have the immense happiness of thinking that you have contributed in some way to the progress and good of humanity."

In the mere contemplation of such great moments of the past a man secures enlargement of

soul, gets a breadth of view impossible to anyone who sees only by the morning paper. But suppose that some man, not content merely to contemplate the great moments of the past, should resolve to identify himself with the men who made those moments great; saying, "All that was great in them shall live again in me. Such choices as they made I, too, will make. Such courage as they showed I, too, will show. Their spirit shall be my spirit, their devotion my devotion." In that case, with how much more truth might it be said that the noble past belongs to him and that by its possession his own life has been enlarged and enriched.

IV

Paul further intimates that the future may belong to us. In one sense, of course, the future belongs to anybody. After he has paid his tuition fee, his laboratory fee, his infirmary fee, and his last week's board bill, a student may enter his room with some secondhand books in his arms, and not a nickel in his pocket, and say, "Ah, but the future belongs to me." It does. So much is the future in that young fellow's possession that, within certain limits fixed by his heredity and

his environment, he can make of to-morrow what he chooses.

But although in one sense the future belongs to everybody, in another sense it does not. In the First Century the future belonged to St. Paul; it did not belong to the men who thought he was a fool. In the Thirteenth Century the future belonged to St. Francis of Assisi; it did not belong to those powerful bishops who every once in a while attempted to silence him. In the Sixteenth Century the future belonged to Martin Luther; it did not belong to His Holiness, the Pope. In the Eighteenth Century the future belonged to John Wesley; it did not belong to those influential ecclesiastics who crowded him out of their churches and forced him, against his own inclinations, to preach in open fields. In the Nineteenth Century the future belonged to Lord Shaftesbury; it did not belong to the coal barons who insisted that there was nothing wrong in forcing little children thirteen, twelve, even ten years of age, to toil twelve hours a day. It belonged to William Lloyd Garrison; it did not belong to men who sought and even fought to keep manacles on the bodies and souls of Negro slaves. My own conviction is that in the Twentieth Century the future belongs to Woodrow

Wilson, not to the men who resented and resisted his League of Nations; that it belongs to Secretary Kellogg, not to people who are deriding and decrying the Paris Pact. In the greatest of all senses, the future belongs only to persons who have that insight which is foresight plus the desire and the courage to do the will of God.

Will you listen once more to this startling passage, and note particularly how it ends? "All belongs to you; Paul, Apollos, Cephas, the world, life, death, the present, and the future—all belongs to you; and you belong to Christ and Christ to God." *And Christ belongs to God.* Does he? Lay aside your theology and pick up your history. For the moment pay no attention to theories, but look hard at facts. What are the facts about Jesus of Nazareth? After nineteen hundred years what must be said concerning his teaching? Has it proved to be false or has it proved to be true? In so far as the world has dared to follow it, has it brought poverty or plenty, strife or peace? And what must be said about the character of Christ? Is it one which, in retrospect, appears to have been somewhat less noble than the highest which the mind of man has been able to conceive and the heart of man to aspire unto? Or is it one which, with the passing of the years,

appears more and more to justify that saying of Renan, "Whatever the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed." Do not all the major events of nineteen crowded centuries, all the successes, and triumphs, and the pitiful, costly blunders, proclaim the everlasting rightness of Jesus? *Do they not even suggest that the universe is on the side of Jesus, that Christ belongs to God?*

If he does then you and I can afford to belong to Christ and we cannot afford not to belong to him. Would it be going too far to say that only as we do belong to him will the future, in any great sense, belong to us? Men who go against him in business, in politics, or anywhere else, may secure wealth, honours, place, power. But only to-day, not to-morrow, belongs to them. Men who go with him may find themselves face downward, sweating blood in some Gethsemane. They may even find themselves shouldering a heavy cross. But if not to-day, certainly to-morrow, belongs to them.

Prayer

To-day, O Father, we give Thee hearty thanks for all those human lives whose contribution is the priceless heritage of our race, whose vision has

lightened the darkness of the world, whose choices have influenced the course of history, whose sufferings nobly borne have opened the eyes of a multitude, and whose devotion has lifted to higher levels the thoughts and ambitions of men. For them, O God, we give Thee thanks, and most earnestly do we pray that we may possess their faith and their courage. Grant unto us the power to see, not only what is, but what may be. Grant unto us the will to choose the highest when we see it. Grant unto us the courage to labour for a world which has, as yet, no existence save in the dreams of prophetic spirits and the mighty purpose of God. Amen.

IS IT WRONG TO DOUBT?

GEORGE ARTHUR BUTTRICK

MINISTER OF THE MADISON AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
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It is "the winsome note of youth" speaking to youth coupled with a keen application of the teachings of Jesus to the problems of our day that have made Dr. George Arthur Buttrick at the age of thirty-six one of the effective preachers at a dozen men's and women's colleges. His recent book, *The Parables of Jesus*, won the immediate notice of the Religious Book of the Month Club and his utterances from the pulpit of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, where he succeeded Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin as minister, are winning him a place of prophetic leadership in New York City. In his preaching we find keenness of thought graced with beauty of diction and straightforwardness of delivery.

Dr. Buttrick was born in England in 1892 and educated at Leeds Central High School, Victoria University, Manchester, and the Lancashire Independent Seminary, but his ministry has been spent in Congregational pastorates in Quincy, Illinois, Rutland, Vermont, and at the First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo, and since 1927 in New York. Hamilton College awarded him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1928

IS IT WRONG TO DOUBT?

GEORGE ARTHUR BUTTRICK

Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.

—Mark 9:24.

Jesus came down from the Mount of Transfiguration and found an epileptic boy whom the disciples had vainly tried to heal. It was one of those vivid contrasts such as were common in the Master's life. A few moments ago the mystic radiance of that hilltop with its awful sense of a Divine Presence; now this child's misery and this father's helpless grief. The father evidently did not expect that Jesus could help the case: "If thou canst do anything," he pleaded. Repeated disappointments had almost slain his hopes, but his love still lived. "If you can do anything, have compassion on us." "If I can do anything" (Jesus echoed the words)—"if I can do anything! Everything is possible to one who believes."

Hope was reborn on the instant. If only he could believe! Quickly he cried with tears,

"Lord, I do believe." Then as the doubts came streaming back he added—with what stark honesty and pitiable sincerity!—"Help Thou mine unbelief. Heal my son even though it is unfaith as much as faith that asks it." So we are confronted with the question of our doubts.

Is it wrong to doubt? Some doubts are wrong because they are not honestly acquired. If we sell out to riotous or miserly living the sour stream of conduct will curdle our thoughts. If a man runs foul of his conscience he cannot expect that recreancy in his life to leave his outlook unaffected. Some doubts are simply the scum of unworthy conduct. A man of that inconsistency came to a wise minister with the complaint that he was in great mental difficulty about religion. "Such as?" he was asked. "Oh, well, about the deity of Jesus." The answer was sharp: "But are you not a little weak also on the ten commandments?" Many so-called doubts would vanish if we could earnestly strive to fulfil the duty concerning which we have no doubts.

Then again, there is a form of doubt which is really intellectual conceit. Many people raise questions about religion who are not deeply serious. They are eager to parade a certain mental smartness. They are in search not of a faith

but of an argument. Nothing can be done with such people until experience brings some crisis or calamity upon them by which they become serious not about a debate, but about God. Jesus never took a doubter more seriously than he took himself. If a doubter came to lay a trap, Jesus snared that man in his own trap. There are numerous incidents of such a kind in the Gospels. But if Jesus found a doubter who was not flippant or cynical or shallow in intellectual pride; if he found a man who, like Nicodemus, wished in very conscience to find God and could not find God, Jesus would spend all night with that man until truth came to meet their questing spirits.

We are speaking, then, about honest doubt. Is it wrong? You know Tennyson's retort to someone who told him doubt was "devil-born." "I know not," he said,

"'I know not: one indeed I knew
In many a subtle question versed,
Who touched a jarring lyre at first,
But ever strove to make it true:

"'Perplext in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out.
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.'"

I am sure Tennyson was nearer to the mind of Jesus than the man who roundly condemned all doubt as devil-born.

We are destined to doubts as the sparks fly upward. There may be those who have no doubts. A woman once told me she never had a doubt concerning religion in all her life. Perhaps my wonder was unjust, but I did wonder if she had any faith worth calling a faith. I know one minister who is not immune from skeptic moods. Browning has described his experience:

"With me, belief means
Perpetual unbelief kept quiet,
Like the snake 'neath Michael's heel
Who stands calm just because he feels it writhe."

Browning stood calm. It can be said of him as he said of one of his characters: "He, at least, believed in Soul, was very sure of God"; but underneath that conviction there was the writhing insinuation that his faith might be false. The faith of the disciples was so dim and variable that Jesus exclaimed of them: "O ye of little faith!" Thomas would not accept proof of the resurrection of Jesus (we are told) until he had thrust his finger into the print of Calvary's nails. And Jesus Himself—does it not appear as if

doubt and a sudden, terrible despair were one element in that mysterious cry of dereliction: "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

We are agreed that there is no value in goodness which is not voted for, chosen, clung to, in face of evil. Perhaps there is no value in a faith which is not voted for, chosen, clung to, in face of the onslaughts of doubt. If faith had no odds to meet it would have scant virtue! If faith were all as clear and simple as "two and two make four," it would be as challenging, as inspiring as "two and two make four"! However that may be, doubts come to us all. At times God seems to be Nothing dwelling in Nowhere. At times prayer seems no better than a futile crying to the sky with no answer but an echo. At times Jesus seems a magnificent but mistaken Idealist, offering us impossible counsels of perfection. At times immortality seems an incredible dream vainly trying to gainsay the cold, real, stubborn fact of death. Is not this father's prayer yours and mine and all men's—"Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

But if we all have doubts, let this be clear: We all have faith. I do not mean that we are all able to pledge allegiance to one or other of the historic creeds. Faith goes far deeper than verbal

or mental assent to a set of theological propositions. Faith is an instinct born in us, and we can no more live without faith than we can live without breathing. The farmer has a kind of faith as he casts seed into the ground—faith in the faithfulness of the returning seasons. The business man has a kind of faith as he makes his investments—faith in the common toil and common honesty of mankind which, in the last resort, is the only guarantee of investments. The scientists have an amazing kind of faith. They believe that this universe is orderly, that it and the mind are so much akin that the mind can reach understanding of the universe. The scientist cannot prove that his mind and the outer world swim in a common medium; he must assume it; it is a gigantic venture of faith. We live by faith; we are compelled so to live.

Thus in the realm which we call religion. We all have faith. This does not mean that faith will be according to the schoolboy's definition: "Faith is believing something which you know is not true." That kind of faith (and there has been sadly too much of it) is not religion. It is blind credulity, self-deception, superstition, black magic—anything but religion. True faith is unafraid of reason; it takes reason as its com-

rade. It plants its flag on the land which reason afterward stakes out and explores! It has a certain courage which is beyond reason. There was nothing very reasonable in the voyage of the *Mayflower*. Its wisdom could not have been demonstrated to sound, practical minds. But those who made up that precious human cargo had a faith, a blind courage if you will, that God is, that conscience must be honoured, that a righteous witness must prevail; and they put their faith to the test of deeds.

We all have this courageous inborn "credo" which is faith. There are times when we do believe in God, or the name would never have been found on human lips. There are times when Jesus constrains us and becomes the "Way, the Truth, and the Life." There are times when we are sure that personality is indestructible. We quietly thrill to the touch of the Eternal. That instinct seems to be a universal birthright. For instance, a society of atheists at Venice sent an address to their king congratulating him on the escape of his son and daughter from assassination. Forgetting they were atheists they thanked Divine Providence for protecting mercy! Robert Ingersoll (and modern knowledge of the Bible has swept away all the props of his poor argument)

uttered his faith. Standing by his brother's grave, he said: "In the night of death hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing." Robert Browning shows Bishop Bloughram talking to one who derided his profession of religion. The Bishop says wisely to his critic: "All right! Let's resolve not to believe anything. The world is without God and without hope. Jesus is a delusion. Prayer is a futility. Let's dismiss the whole realm of religion. What happens? Why, faith comes back! Now the problem is—how to guard our unbelief, for belief comes back to shake us by fits and starts. And" (you recall the lovely words!) "just when we are most fixed in our unfaith"—

"Just when we're safest, there's a sunset-touch,
A fancy from a flower-bell, someone's death,
A chorus-ending from Euripides—
And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears
As old and new at once as Nature's self,
To rap and knock and enter in our soul,
Take hands and dance there, a fantastic ring,
Round the ancient Idol, on his base again,
The Grand Perhaps!"

If we cast God to the void, a shudder passes through us—the shudder of faith!—and the old

questions rise and beg for answer. Faith at times seems to have nothing to which to cling:

"To be mauled to the earth and arise,
And contend for the shade of a word, and a thing not seen with the eyes:
With half of a broken hope for a pillow at night
That somehow the right is the right,
And the smooth shall bloom from the rough:
Lord, if that were enough?"

Even when faith has reached that extremity, it still has strength left to hold on to—"a thing not seen with the eyes." We all have doubts. We all have faith.

What, then, are we to do? Are there practical guidances which we may follow? Yes. First, we must be honest with our doubts. We must look at them frankly. If they are buried they become like poison. They are like the measles: health is served if they "come out." The only sure way to avoid impure air is to give up breathing. Perhaps the only sure way to avoid doubts is to give up thinking. In both cases the price is too high. Doubts may sometimes be the sign of intellectual vigour. I am afraid of the college man, for instance, who has no doubts. A well-known jurist once admitted that he was sorely perplexed on the sub-

ject of inspiration; whereupon some zealous but mistaken minister took him to task. Most men, he said, who had such difficulties were too wicked "to be reasoned with." But Jesus never so rebuked honest doubt. He was marvellously patient with Nicodemus. He healed the son of this doubting father. He let Thomas put his hands in the nail-prints. Jesus always respected honest doubt.

A Sunday-school teacher was wont to tell his class that whenever he found skepticism creeping in on him, he would cry: "I believe, I believe, I believe," until he had flogged his unwilling mind back to acquiescence. I can recall that even to our small-boyish minds there seemed to be something dishonourable about the method. We looked on him as one who practised an unworthy self-hypnotism. There is no need to foist our doubts on other people, but we must frankly face them for ourselves. Jesus deals tenderly and understandingly with an honest mind.

Second, we must remember that religious faith cannot (in the nature of things) be proved in the same way as a fact of science. How can you tell that a potato is good? Peel it, weigh it, cut it, eat it! But how do you tell if a poem is good? Do you peel it, weigh it, cut it, eat it? No: those

tests do not apply. There are other tests: Does it move with the rhythm of the worlds? Has it loveliness, like the tracery of winter trees? Does it kindle our finest motive? Does it impel us to the rhythm and loveliness of noble living? If so, it is a good poem. Religion is much more akin to a poem than to a potato—and its tests are much more akin to poem-tests. Human love is not proved in a test tube; it proves itself—its "witness is within." The love of God is not proved in a test tube; it, also, is its own best evidence. The tests of faith are after this order: "Is my faith clearest to me in my best moments? Is it at least consistent with honest thinking in other realms? Does it inspire me to finer conduct? Does it make for the creation of a better world?" If the answer is "Yes" then faith is good, and it will be verified in the living.

Once more, if we have both faith and doubt, let us cleave to our faith. All people believe and all people disbelieve—but there is, nevertheless, a great difference among people. Some make their faith the determining fact, though they have doubts. Others make their doubts the determining fact, though they have faith. Notice the prayer of this father: "Lord, I believe." That was the uppermost thing! The other was secondary,

and to be conquered: "Help Thou mine unbelief." Horace Bushnell was once so plunged in perplexities that he lost every conviction except the faith that somehow right is right. That was not much of a god, but he worshipped that god. Instead of wandering round a squirrel cage of intellectual subtleties, he resolved to cling to the measure of faith he possessed. He knelt and prayed to the abstract principle of right. "A dreary prayer," he admitted. But it was positive, it was honest; and he emerged into light! There was another who prayed in like fashion: "O God, if there is a God, save my soul, if I am a soul." That was an interrogation rather than a prayer, but it was a positive interrogation. If we have both faith and doubt, let us cleave to the positive within us, and courageously carry it to the test of life. Life will not fail us!

"For nothing worthy proving can be proven,
Nor yet disproven: wherefore be thou wise,
Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,
And cling to Faith beyond the forms of Faith!
She reels not in the storm of warring words,
She brightens at the clash of 'Yes' and 'No,'
She sees the Best that glimmers through the worst,
She feels the Sun is hid but for a night."

And a final word: There is Jesus! He is always the final word! He is the final word in this matter of faith and doubt. Is your deepest instinct to believe in God the Father?—to believe that unselfish love is your duty and your enrichment?—that beyond this bourne of time and place the Divine Righteousness endures? Is this your faith, even though it may often swim in doubt? Well, there is Jesus! In Him your instincts are made flesh; your hopes take life! He is no mere hope. He is there—set in the midst of years, never to be moved! Does He mean nothing for your inborn faith? Surely He shelters faith—like the shadow of a rock! Surely He causes faith to triumph—like an army with banners! Surely He is Heaven's sign and promise that our faith is true! Thanks be to God who gives our doubts the lie in Him! "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

Prayer

Our God and Father by whose compassionate will Jesus came into the narrow valley of this earth, we own in Him our Way, our Truth, our Life. His courage constrains us. His sacrifice melts our stubborn hearts. Stamp His image on our eyes until we see all things through Him.

Keep us in carefree hours that we forget not Thee. Keep us in hours of decision that in high choice we may obey the "needs must" of the soul.

The dark road with Him has secrets of joy which the world can neither give nor remove. All other roads lead us to a wilderness in which we follow wandering fires. O Lord, for courage and love, that with steadfast faces we may walk with Him! Amen.

THE MIRAGE BECOMES A POOL

HENRY SLOANE COFFIN

PRESIDENT OF UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
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It was but six years after graduating from Yale College in 1897 that Henry Sloane Coffin returned to Yale as visiting preacher. He has served in that capacity ever since, preaches there now on four Sundays a year, and is certainly one of the several most consistently effective university preachers in the land. His message gets hold of the student mind in colleges of North, South, East, and West. No one is more in demand for series of meetings on campuses and at the summer conferences. Through the leadership which has come to him as President of Union Theological Seminary, and through his addresses and writings, his influence in the undergraduate and theological worlds has taken on an international scope. His preaching is characterized by rare powers of exposition. Intellectual acumen, an appreciation of history and the arts, a measured liberalism and a keen social passion are further marks of the man.

Dr. Coffin was born in 1877 in New York and went from Yale College to theological studies at New College, Edinburgh, and at Marburg, and graduated from Union Seminary in 1900. He was minister of the Bedford Park Presbyterian Church from 1900 to 1905, and in 1905 became minister of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, which under his leadership became one of the country's strongest parishes, marked by a ministry to all classes of people. From 1904 to 1926 he was also Associate Professor of Practical Theology in Union Seminary. and in 1926 became President of Union Seminary.

He was Lecturer on the Beecher Foundation at Yale in 1918, and on the Warrack Foundation in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen, in 1926, and on the Russell Foundation at Auburn Seminary in the same year. He has written many books, among them the following: *The Creed of Jesus, The Christian and the Church, The Ten Commandments, Christian Convictions, What Is There in Religion, Portraits of Jesus Christ, What to Preach.*

THE MIRAGE BECOMES A POOL

HENRY SLOANE COFFIN

The mirage shall become a pool.—Isaiah 35:7.

Some years ago a Frenchman, dying, left instructions that nothing be placed on his gravestone but the dates of his birth and death and the single word "Disillusioned—désillusionné." Is this cynical inscription an inappropriate epitaph for even the happiest career? Does not illusion form part of the education of every life? Is there not always a mirage on our horizon?

A child interprets the world about him and his experiences by many—to us—fancies. His imagination sees a fairy in a budding flower, a man in the moon, a Santa Claus beneficently active at Christmas. One may say: "Poor little idiot! let him live in his fool's paradise as long as he can. The realities of life are grim and he will have to face them soon enough." But a child is not a fool, although he dwells readily in a world of make-believe. These fanciful explanations capture his imagination, rivet his attention, and

connect him with the facts of flower and moon and gifts of affection. He could not understand, if you tried to tell him, the science of botany or the findings of astronomy, or the financial processes by which grown-ups provide his Christmas stocking. His illusions are a necessary and valuable stage in his development. And when the day of disillusionment arrives, it need not be a sad experience: usually it is quite the reverse. The marvels of plant structure and growth, the wonders of the birth and death of planets, the unveiling of the thought and love of parents and of aunts and uncles, more than compensate for the passing of fairies and man-in-the-moon and genial St. Nicholas. Even Wordsworth, who insists that heaven lies about us in our infancy and life moves into an ever more shadowed prison, speaks of this disillusionment through contact with fact as

> "that delightful time of growing youth
> When craving for the marvellous gives way
> To strengthening love for things that we have seen."

The mirage becomes a pool.

A boy has day-dreams of his career, and upon the stage where he foresees himself he is always

a star performer and cast in a unique rôle. Disraeli said that at sixteen everyone believes that he is the most peculiar man who ever lived. Unquestionably the boy's egotism will receive many a hard knock, and his enthusiasm will be dampened by many a wet blanket. But how useful those early day-dreams are! They supply the motive which takes us across the arid stretch of the years of training and apprenticeship. They may sometimes seem to us like the deceptive mirage; for when we arrive in our chosen calling, how humdrum most of our work is and how insignificant are we and our doings on the world's vast stage. In middle life we smile at the extravagant conceit of our airy hopes, but most of us bear witness that we discover more substantial satisfaction in our prosaic work than we had reckoned on in our rosiest forecasts. Ask men in the professions or in business callings plodding along with no spectacular successes to their credit, but seriously trying to serve the commonweal, whether they have achieved their ambitions of college days. They will laugh at the recollection of their visions, but most of them will tell you that there are many compensations which never entered into their pictures. The mirage has become a pool.

Again our early friendships are often romantic attachments. Think of the "inseparables" found among girls in their early teens, and of the "crushes" which girls have at times upon some older girl. The companionships of college years are usually sentimental and at a reunion decades later an old graduate becomes expansive as he dilates upon his feelings toward his classmates. "What passions those friendships were!" wrote Thackeray of his undergraduate days at Cambridge. But as time passes responsibilities place us in a more detached attitude toward our friends. We become more reserved and more discriminating. While much of the earlier sentimentality disappears, who will say that the calmer friendships of our later years are less enriching? Often it is in retrospect that we appreciate what a friend has really meant to us. You may recall how Francis Thompson employs the metaphor of our text in describing the friendship given him when, a lonely and homeless man, he was taken into the Meynell household. He is writing of one of the small daughters:

"As an Arab journeyeth
Through a sand of Ayaman,
Lean thirst lolling its cracked tongue,
Lagging by his side along . . .

He lifts by hap toward where the morning's roots are
His weary stare,—
Sees the palm and tamarind
Tangle the tresses of a phantom-wind . . .
'Tis a vision:
Yet the greeneries of Elysium
He has known in tracts afar . . .
Such a watered dream has tarried
Trembling on my desert arid:
Even so
Its lovely gleamings
Seemings show
Of things not seemings."

And he speaks of the refreshment to his jaded soul this friendship with a little girl brought:

"In little exquisite surprises
Bubbling deliciousness of thee arises
From sudden places
Under the common traces
Of my most lethargied and customed paces."

The mirage became a pool.

Again, in the supreme human comradeship—lovers are notoriously in an unreal world. Life's desert has become for them all oasis. The cynic is at hand to speak of the disenchantment in store. Dr. Samuel Johnson wrote as satirically as

the most biting contemporary sneerer at marriage:

"A youth and a maiden meeting by chance or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home and dream of each other. Having little to divert attention or diversify thought, they find themselves weary when they are apart, and therefore conclude that they would be happy together. They marry and discover what nothing but voluntary blindness had concealed."

To disillusionizers the raptures of love are Nature's sly device to mate human beings. Lovers confess their own exalted condition, and tell you that their new-found happiness gives them the sensation of walking on air. Married couples do not convey that impression. And it is well that they do not. Pater- and materfamilias need to have their feet firmly planted on the ground. But does this mean that man and wife feel themselves cheated? Comrades in work and play, partners in thought and prayer, the silver or the golden wedding day celebrates inestimably more that each means to the other than either dreamed could be in their courtship or honeymoon. In lines entitled "Acknowledgment" Sidney Lanier addresses his wife:

"By the more height of thy sweet stature grown,
Twice-eyed with thy gray vision set in mine,
I ken far lands to wifeless men unknown,
I compass stars for one-sexed eyes too fine."

And Mrs. Browning wrote to her husband:

"I lived with visions for my company
Instead of men and women years ago.
Then thou didst come to *be*
Beloved, what they *seemed*. Their shining fronts,
Their songs, their splendours . . .
Met in thee, and from out thee overcame
My soul with satisfaction of all wants—
Because God's gifts put man's best dreams to shame."

Many a man and wife can say to each other "All my springs are in thee." The mirage becomes a pool.

Illusion seems to be an essential part of the arrangement of life. There is something in certain atmospheric conditions and in the structure of our eyes that renders the sight of a mirage inevitable. But illusion is not identical with delusion. We should not have sight of palms and water on the desert if these did not truly exist somewhere. In life to be disillusioned is not by any means always to be disappointed. On the

contrary, the reality to which the illusion has led us frequently proves far more delightful than the vision.

Because God's gifts put man's best dreams to shame.

And if illusion be a normal part of the process of life, we ought to expect it in our religious experience—our life with God. And it is of that which I wish to speak supremely in this final sermon of your academic course.

What a kaleidoscopic picture meets the eye which looks back over the spiritual history of our race! Think of the forms which religion has taken through the long centuries from the days of cavemen to our own: animism—influences and powers thought of as inherent in the forces of nature; fetishism—these powers magically resident in objects and released by incantations; polytheism, man dimly becoming aware of himself as a person, peoples the air about him, the summit of a tall mountain like Olympus, the sky overhead, with hosts of gods; monotheism—one god to each clan or tribe. Israel's Jehovah, dwelling on Sinai or in the temple at Jerusalem, pitted against Chemosh, the god of Moab, or Rimmon, the Syrian divinity at Damascus; then becoming the God of the spirits of all flesh, the high and

lofty One that inhabiteth eternity whose name is holy, the Father of Jesus Christ to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. It is easy to view the process as a chapter of hallucinations and to regard men as dupes of fond imaginings; to call

> "that angel world
> A gaudy window which we paint ourselves
> To hide the dead, void night beyond."

But we shall have sturdy protests from ten thousand times ten thousand throughout the ages, who have received from their religion their most empowering incentives, their most unfailing supports, their most exhilarating refreshments. Mr. Julian Huxley speaks of religion as "a biological necessity" and stresses the instinct for God as a permanent element in our make-up, like the craving for food. Are not then all these beliefs, however crude, to be viewed not as delusions of terrified and imaginative minds, but as illusions—the mirages which have captured man's heart from primitive times and lured him to trust and hope, not in order to deceive him, but that his soul might slake its thirst at the fountain of living waters? By faith—faith often in crass conceptions of deity—he subdued king-

doms, and wrought righteousness. The mirage became a pool.

Nor does it lessen the worth of our present Christian convictions if we frankly admit that they, too, may contain illusory elements. If we stop to reflect, we grant that they cannot be final views, but the best we have so far attained. We are confident that they are not delusions: far too much comfort and enlightenment and inspiration come to us through them for them to be a mere mirage. But they are imperfect descriptions of the pool at which we quench our very real thirst. We hope that our successors will know far more about it and speak of it more intelligently; and we ourselves expect, as life advances, to be both surprised and corrected as we know more fully. So we cling

> "to Faith beyond the forms of Faith.
> She reels not in the storm of warring words,
> She finds the fountain where they wailed mirage."

Let us look together at a few essential Christian convictions. Take our belief in a God who has personal relations with you and me. If we have had any first-hand touch with the Invisible through prayer, if we have looked for guidance, for sympathy, for sustaining friendship, we can-

not help saying with George Eliot's Silas Marner: "There's dealings with us, there's dealings."

So, with Jesus and all the believers of the Bible, and their followers through the ages, we speak of God as possessing a Heart, a Conscience, a Mind, as being one with whom we have comradeship. But when we turn to examine the universe, if the God we worship is its God we must confess that He makes an impersonal impression on us—as Force in whirling electrons, as adaptable Life in myriad plants and creatures, as Order in this unfailingly regular and dependable scheme of things, as Beauty looking forth upon us in the pomp and splendour of June. It is difficult for us to combine these two conceptions—the God who is Force, Life, Order, Beauty, with the God who is Father of Jesus Christ. Many thoughtful men and women abandon altogether the God with whom one has personal relations, to whom one prays, who forgives and redeems and loves to the uttermost. On the other hand, many devout folk shudder at the scientific view of the universe, denounce it as godless, attempt to have legislatures forbid teachers to impart it to boys and girls, and retire into conceptions of the past, asserting that the God of their ancestors is good enough for them.

Are not both needlessly impoverishing themselves? Why not admit that when we speak of God as personal we employ an inadequate symbol, but the best we have, to express what we have discovered in our intercourse with Him? Why not also grant that these impersonal phrases—Force, Life, Order, Beauty—are likewise imperfect symbols, our most intelligible attempts so far to interpret the sum of things? Both contain illusion; but both lead us on to a supreme Reality. When we trust ourselves to God, found along either line of research, the mirage becomes a pool. "With Thee is the Fountain of Life."

Take our belief in Jesus Christ. If we have really let Him control our attitude toward people, break bad habits, determine our purposes, open up for us His reënforcements, we know that He possesses extraordinary power. He seems the embodiment of moral Force. If we have thought about Him until His character made its impress upon our minds, if we have studied what He was to those who knew Him at the first and what He has meant to His followers ever since, we are on our knees before Him. He is to us the divinest we know. God, if God there be, cannot be better. But historians, investigat-

ing the documents which record His career, set His figure before us as a Man of the First Century with many of the ideas of His time, who was pictured by His adherents in terms of their age, some of which mean little to us. To-day as so often before in Christian history there is strife between those who stress the Christ of traditional faith and the Christ of scientific investigation. Men seem compelled to accept either the Jesus of critical research and speak of Him merely as a remarkable man; or to disregard current research as infidelity, and to think of Him in the terms of some venerable creed. Can we not be true both to accurate history and to indubitable Christian experience? When we call Jesus Man, we are using a symbol, and we know very imperfectly yet what man may be. When we call Him God, we know even less what God is. We are doing our best to be just to all the facts which history and faith supply, when we say that He is human and divine—God in Man—One like ourselves who does for us things utterly beyond us.

In her *Recollections*, the late Mrs. Humphry Ward tells us how in her youthful years of revolt against religion she met Walter Pater at Oxford, and confidently expecting his sympathy re-

marked that historic Christianity was on the point of collapse, and that they would live to see its breakdown. He shook his head, "I don't think so." Then with hesitation he continued: "And we don't altogether agree. You think it's all plain. But I can't. There are such mysterious things. Take that saying 'Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden.' How can you explain that? There is mystery in it—something supernatural." And there is. This man, like ourselves, presumptuously invites the whole world of His sinning brethren and offers to satisfy our deepest needs. And myriads declare that He does so. Every creed which has been written about Him contains illusion. But that does not mean that we are cheated when we commit ourselves to Him as Saviour from sin, as Leader in redeeming society, as Mediator of abundant life with man and with God. The mirage becomes a pool. "If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink."

Or take the hope of immortality, the continuing life with God of all who have begun to live with Him here. Jesus was confident of it. "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you." Of that existence

beyond the flaming ramparts of our world we possess not a scrap of information which would pass as reliable knowledge. It is easy to ask numberless questions at which we dare not hazard a guess. Most of us have asked them, or heard them asked. It is common to sneer at the static conception of heaven in Christian hymns. But when all is said to discredit this hope, it abides, and under certain circumstances becomes man's dearest possession.

Not long since was published a brief memorial collection of the fugitive writings of a young man of letters who had died on the threshold of his career. It was introduced by William Benet, who writes: "We have all had such friends, mysteriously, stupidly—one felt—taken before they had been given time to leave some permanent impress of themselves except in our hearts. I cannot, for myself, believe that a spirit such as his is wasted. Certainly it is wasted in that he did not leave behind him lasting evidence of his great artistic ability. Beyond that, however, I myself believe in a reason and a purpose for such spirits which does not exhaust itself merely upon this imperfect world. It is this faith, largely, that helps me to live."

Call our loftiest hopes of the life to come illusions, that does not mean that our anticipations are doomed to be disappointed. On the contrary, if life here has taught us anything through our experiences of our world, of work, of fellow humans, of God, it is that illusions are the means of leading us to realities which eclipse them. As we look toward the unexplored beyond, we say to ourselves: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." We do not take the imagery of John on Patmos or of St. Paul as furnishing exact information of the heavenly country. But experience taught them, as it teaches you and me, that the prime necessities for abundant life are usefulness, companionship, character; and it is these which they set at the centre of their visions: "His servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads." "Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three."

Suppose our hymns and prayers be largely symbols of our longings, this is not to say that when for us and ours death comes these shall melt into thin air, and, like an insubstantial pageant faded, leave not a rack behind. We are

such stuff as dreams are made on! Our life from childhood, in work and friendship and love and religion, is of imagination all compact. Our experience leads us to expect that in death, as throughout life, for those who are journeying with God, the mirage shall become a pool. The New Jerusalem may be quite other than our social dreams forefancy. But unless we pronounce fallacious all the testimony of generations, who marching through earth on the highway of holiness have found the thirsty ground springs of water, the ransomed of the Lord shall come with singing into Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads.

Take this travelling song of faith. Make it of right your own by devoting yourselves, like those for whom it was written, to set up in our world the commonwealth of God, and to take for yourselves in every situation the holiest way —the way of Christ. Cynics will scoff at the forecasts of your faith: admit frankly that with our limited knowledge we must cherish illusions. But do not despise hopes born of faith. Here on your path through an earth which unbelieving souls disparage, and yonder whither sight cannot penetrate, for those who walk in fellowship with God—the mirage shall become a pool.

Prayer

Faithful God, who of old didst sustain Thy people with a glorious hope, and in Jesus Christ gavest them other but far more than they had dreamed, assure us that naught that we can ask or think for our world or for ourselves is too good for Thee. Teach us that in every disappointment Thou art preparing for us some better thing and in every loss enriching us with a more abiding possession. Fix our minds upon Thy will, that doing and bearing it, our path may be as the dawning light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. And if our prayers seem unanswered, remind us of Him who sought, if possible, some other cup, but drinking that which Thou gavest Him found it a cup running over with joy for all mankind and for him. Amen.

THE INFLUENCE OF ATMOSPHERE

CHARLES WHITNEY GILKEY

DEAN OF THE CHAPEL, THE UNIVERSITY
OF CHICAGO

The religious life of Chicago University will be followed with increasing interest now that Charles Whitney Gilkey has assumed the recently created deanship of the new University Chapel. In the spring of 1928 he resigned the pastorate of the Hyde Park Baptist Church of Chicago and will bring to his new post a rich pastoral experience that should intensify the value of his contribution to the academic community. Once again the attention of the religious world is focussed upon a great university as a centre of experiment and new life for the Church.

Dr. Gilkey is a calm, quiet, thoughtful preacher, and his voice carries a deep earnestness. He knows the mind of the day, is something of a mystic, and is a skilful user of analogy.

He was born in Watertown, Massachusetts, in 1882, and graduated from Harvard College in 1903, receiving an M.A. degree in 1904. He took his B.D. at Union Theological Seminary, and pursued further studies at Berlin, Marburg, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Oxford. He was awarded the degree of Doctor of Divinity by Williams and Hillsdale in 1925, and by Yale in 1927.

He became pastor of the Hyde Park Baptist Church in 1910, and continued in that capacity until his present appointment. He was the Barrows Lecturer to the university centres of India in 1925, and became Professor of Homiletics in the University of Chicago Divinity School in 1926. Among his books are: *New Frontiers for Faith* and *Present Day Dilemmas in Religion.*

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THE INFLUENCE OF ATMOSPHERE

CHARLES WHITNEY GILKEY

The botanists tell us that when they subject a tree to the process which they call destructive distillation—that is, when they burn it in a vacuum furnace in order to separate its permanent from its perishable elements—the result is not at all what most of us would naturally expect. We should have taken it for granted that the real and enduring tree would prove to be made up out of elements derived through its roots, from the solid earth out of which it has so obviously grown. Not at all, says the botanist, with a smile perhaps for our lay ignorance, and the remark that here once more things are not what they seem. To be sure, these elements derived through its roots are indispensable to the health and growth of the tree. Cut off those roots or clog them up, and the tree will wither and die. But in the vacuum furnace it is precisely these elements secured from the ground beneath that consume into ashes and fall away. The pure

carbon which outlasts this ultimate test and proves itself the enduring tree is the element which the tree secured through its leaves from the invisible and impalpable atmosphere around and above it.

Ever since one of the great botanists of his generation, Professor John M. Coulter of the University of Chicago, told me this curious fact about the constitution of trees, it has seemed to me a parable of human experience at a dozen points; and at no point more accurate or illuminating than in its bearing on the process of education. That process, alike in home and school and college, goes forward in an atmosphere as invisible and often as imperceptible as the air around a tree, the presence of which we feel and the tree indicates only now and then when the wind bloweth where it listeth. But the influence of that same atmosphere, largely unrealized at the time, proves in the crucible of after life to have contributed to a school or college graduate those elements which have most to do with the enrichment of his living and the constitution of his character.

Every alumnus who returns to his alma mater for a major class reunion, as some of us do this

year, confronts at once an obvious and familiar illustration of this fact. As an undergraduate much the larger part of his time and energy went into certain academic activities in classroom and laboratory and library that were as indispensable to his success and progress as a student as roots to the growth of a tree. If he failed to assimilate through these intellectual roots a certain minimum of knowledge and aptitude, some inconsiderate dean was pretty certain to suggest transplantation to another section of the academic garden, designated by the numerals of some later class, as the best way of stimulating his sluggish mental development. And if this minor change of academic location did not avail, some ruthless dean might even recommend transplantation over the garden wall altogether, in the hope that a complete change of scene and soil to some other institution or occupation might better suit his intellectual idiosyncrasies!

But what has happened in the crucible of after life to these academically indispensable facts and figures and formulæ, which as undergraduates we dinned into our reluctant heads? Some of them would not even stay there until the first bell of a final examination, and we were fortunate

indeed if they did not disappear before the last bell. Dean Sperry of Harvard tells of finding on a bench of the Oxford examination hall, carved in relief with a skilful penknife, the representation of a tombstone bearing this inscription: "Sacred to my memory, which departed from me on June . ., 19 . ." As returning alumni, most of us shudder to think what would happen now if we were set down before an examination in any of the courses which as undergraduates we passed with reasonable competence: the facts which were then on the tips of our tongues and the ends of our fingers have since consumed into ashes, and blown away out the open windows of our well-ventilated minds!

And if it is pointed out, as it ought to be, that education is not so much the mere learning of facts which one sooner or later then proceeds to forget as the development in a stimulating environment of capacities and resources for rich and serviceable living, the truth still remains that many if not most of the aptitudes which one develops in college prove all too temporary in the crucible of after life. The physical endurance and accuracy which were essential to athletic prowess, and which cost long and laborious hours of training to develop, soon slip away under the

pressure of business or professional life. The techniques of laboratory and gridiron, of tennis court and stage, all alike disintegrate rapidly with disuse. The versatility that in senior year could produce on short notice a sonnet or a skit or a short story, put on a play or even write one if necessary, run a paper or carry an election or manage a team or a production, disappears all too soon in the crucible of a life so strenuous that there is hardly time or energy sufficient even for one's main job. These activities that once gave variety, richness, and colour to college life prove to be as temporary in their contribution as the roots of a tree.

But meanwhile ask the thoughtful graduate of any college really worth going to what gains from his college experience have endured long after facts are forgotten and aptitudes have gone. His answer is likely to come in terms that suggest the carbon which the tree derives through its leaves from the atmosphere around and above it. Certain points of view and attitudes that he absorbed, largely without realizing it, from the atmosphere around him during those four formative years; certain perspectives and standards that became insensibly his own while he breathed that higher, clearer air; certain interests and

enthusiasms that were aroused, and certain purposes that were confirmed, by the companionship of his mates and especially by the kindling influence of his teachers—these are the things that have stayed longest and deepest as the permanent acquisitions of his college years.

Looking back across twenty-five years to one course of study under William James, I can recall in particular only a vivid simile or two from his lectures; the rest has gone. But as long as I live my attitude toward life and its problems and my perspective on its values will be essentially different because of what I absorbed from the carbon-laden atmosphere which he carried around with him. So is it with any great teacher—or any great coach. "The most valuable thing I have found in my four years here," said a brilliant University of Chicago athlete just before his graduation, "has been the personal influence of Mr. Stagg." He was not speaking of the football technique which his coach had indeed taught him; that he would lose with the years. He was speaking of an attitude and spirit which he had caught in the process—and which was his henceforth to keep. A prominent business man in Chicago, writing a letter recently to accompany his gift to the endowment fund of the college

from which he had graduated forty years before, said that what had stayed longest with him and proved most valuable to him among all the gifts that the college had given him were certain things that had been said in chapel, to which at the time he had given no particular attention and attached no special significance. He had absorbed them half consciously, out of the atmosphere: but in the crucible of life they had proved to be the pure carbon of his college course.

The moral which any educational institution may well draw for itself from this oft-repeated experience of its graduates is of course plain. No quantitative bulk and no vigorous functioning of the academic roots of learning—essential though these are to the educational process; and no costly equipment in buildings or curriculum—valuable though these are within their own limits—can contribute to the permanent enrichment of its graduates those carbonlike acquisitions which are derived from the atmosphere created by its inspiring personalities, by the standards of work and service that are recognized and shared among its students and faculty, by the contagious spirit that quickens its common life. A college with such an atmosphere, whatever its other limitations, is rich and enriching;

and a college without such an atmosphere, no matter what its other resources, is poor in the things that matter most.

But at this "commencement" season we are all interested chiefly in the diverging paths that are opening out into active and responsible life before you who are members of this graduating class. Some of you, who are taking your degrees in technical or professional fields, may well have been saying to yourselves that while the main point of this baccalaureate sermon doubtless holds for those bachelors of arts who have been taking a general cultural course, it is much less true and important for you who will be using your whole lives long the technical tools of your trade that you have been mastering here. I grant at once the considerable difference between their situation and yours, but remind you at the same time that if your work in the world involves in its doing other people besides yourself, the atmosphere in which it is carried on will contribute hardly less to its final outcome than the technique with which it is done. Doctors and lawyers as well as teachers and ministers learn only by slow degrees what most women understand instinctively: that in all human relationships the way in which a thing is done counts in

the final outcome almost as much as the thing that is done. An atmosphere of mutual understanding and confidence and good will contributes to the permanence and usefulness of any work in the world elements hardly less valuable than those produced by the work itself. In all such characteristic problems of our modern world as those involved in the relations between capital and labour, between racial and religious groups and social classes in the community, and between the different nations of the earth, the contribution of the atmosphere is almost as important as, and even more enduring than, that of any other factor in the complicated situation. If you have learned that secret and begun to live and work in that atmosphere here in college, you have something to take with you out into life that will enrich and reënforce all your labour and all your living through the years that are ahead.

There follows from this principle also an important consequence for the carrying forward of your own education. Doubtless some local newspaper will say of you in the next week or two, as of successive generations of your predecessors, that you have now at last "completed your education." If you have in any sense caught the

spirit of this institution of learning you will appreciate the humour of that well-worn journalistic phrase. You know well enough that your own education is in process still, and is simply entering this week upon a new stage. In that new stage, the academic roots of the process—lectures and laboratories and libraries—will henceforth for most of you count for much less, and the atmosphere in which you deliberately and persistently choose to live will count for much more.

Two or three of us were among the first guests for dinner in a new home recently founded by two college classmates; and as we came down the narrow apartment stairs afterward, another guest remarked to me that he was particularly glad to see so many well-worn books and such careful provision for them in that tiny apartment, for he had been struck by the fact that in the homes of so many college graduates which he visited these days there seemed no sign of any serious reading or continuing intellectual interest. That home at least will not lack for atmosphere. Some years ago I rode into Chicago on a suburban morning train with a rising lawyer who promptly pulled out of his green bag a copy of Trevelyan's *Life of John Bright*, and began to read at a point marked in the margin. When

I commented on the contrast between the quality of his reading matter and that of the morning newspapers in which most of the other passengers were absorbed, he explained that he was using the forty-five minutes which the train gave him twice every working day for some of the world's great literature that he had wanted to read ever since he left college, for which he had supposed until recently that he had no time. His education had not been "completed" when he graduated from Princeton twenty-odd years ago. He was continuing it in an intellectual atmosphere of his own making.

What is thus likely to prove true of your further education in the "school of life" is even more likely to reveal itself in your friendships. The crucible of after life puts college friendships to a searching test, the results of which are often surprising. Most of us had taken it for granted in college that our classmates, and especially our fraternity brothers, and most of all our roommates—with whom we had worked and played and eaten and slept for three or four years of daily intimacy—would of course continue to be our lifelong intimates; that these close associations, which had quantitatively bulked so large, would prove to be the roots of our most enduring

and influential friendships. But as the class reunions have come and gone, some of us have found that the men to whom we have turned for understanding and counsel in our critical decisions at the forks in the road have proved to be men whom we came to know well only late in our college course, when a long walk up the river under a May moon, discussing what life is all about anyway, or a closer acquaintance that chiefly developed only after graduation, revealed common atmosphere of mutual understanding and stimulation in which these most influential friendships of our lives have since grown up. The permanent values of friendship are measured much more by the amount of such carbon in its atmosphere than by the statistical size of its roots.

And in these frank-spoken, sex-drenched modern days, when a great many people are talking and writing as if love between man and woman were purely a product of the roots of life, a thing of passion and infatuation while blood is red and runs fast, but certain then after its brief hour to turn to ashes whose taste is stale at the best and at the worst bitter, we shall do well to remind ourselves of something which not only the poets and the greater novelists and dramatists, but un-

numbered thousands of happily married lovers, have long since discovered—something which perhaps our sophisticated modern world is peculiarly liable to forget. While it is indeed true that the roots of life do contribute to love between man and woman some of the richest elements in its creative vitality and its vivid colour, it is no less true that its permanence and dependability come chiefly out of that atmosphere of mutual respect and confidence and loyalty in which husband and wife have continued to live and work and play and laugh and weep together, long years after youth and its quick passions have passed. The permanence and the enduring value of any human affection between man and woman, hardly less than between man and man or woman and woman, depend even more on the quality of its atmosphere than upon the bulk of its roots.

What education and friendship thus discover to be true in their own areas of life, religion declares to be true of all our living. Sane and intelligent religion freely grants to science its full and unhampered right to describe and explain the processes by which life as we know it has grown up through its roots from the soil out of which it has so obviously sprung. But religion

insists that it is with man as with the tree. Human nature and its capacities are not limited to or by its relationships through its roots with the world of nature beneath and behind it. Man, too, can reach out and up into the invisible and the imponderable around and above him; can establish relations of give-and-take with the order of the universe which he cannot fully comprehend, with the beauty which he cannot fully capture, with the ideals which he cannot wholly realize, with the power and the goodness and the love which are greater than his own. Out of that give-and-take with the invisible above and beyond him have come such indestructible treasures as the proportions of the Parthenon, the harmonies and rhythms of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, the thinking of Plato and Einstein, the odes of Wordsworth and Keats, the character of Christ. Such characteristically "religious experiences" as contemplation, prayer, and worship are the healthy functioning of these appreciative, responsive, and upreaching capacities in human nature; not to be stunted and starved, nor yet to be divorced from his other capacities and relationships, but rather to supplement and enrich them. And the faith of religion, which it cannot prove but only live by, is that what man

thus makes his own out of the invisible realm of truth and beauty and goodness and love in which and for which he chooses to live, is his to keep forever.

So might some of the deepest experiences and highest hopes of religion be stated in terms suggested by the parable of the tree. But religion has its own characteristic and classic statement of these great matters, which I give you finally to-day as your baccalaureate text; asking you to reflect on the discriminating accuracy of its adjectives, and above all to remember the validity of its perspectives:

"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."—II Cor. 4:18.

Prayer

O Thou in whom we live and move and have our being whenever our lives reach out to their highest and their best, and who hast so made us for Thyself that we are never satisfied until we find our life in Thee: grant unto these Thy children, through all the years before them, an ever enlarging acquaintance with the things unseen and eternal. So may their

minds grow keener in the quest for truth, their will stronger in the cause of right, their lives more sensitive in the presence of beauty and more generous in the service of love. And so may they serve their day and generation richly by the will of God. Amen.

THE CHRISTIAN'S USE OF MONEY

HENRY HALLAM TWEEDY

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Henry Hallam Tweedy, Professor of Practical Theology in the Yale Divinity School, is not only a regular preacher at a score of our men's colleges, but he also visits the women's colleges with rare effectiveness, sometimes for a week of prayer and special meetings, and is further one of the most popular speakers at the preparatory schools. Ever since he came back to Yale in 1909 he has been a quiet, steady influence for religion among undergraduates as well as seminarians. Utter friendliness, real humility and consecration, are combined in him with an alert mind that understands the times in which we live. He has a gift for the leadership of public worship which combines happily with his gifts as a preacher.

Mr. Tweedy was born in Binghamton, New York, in 1868, and received his B.A. from Yale in 1891. He attended Union Theological Seminary from 1893 to 1896, and the University of Berlin from 1896 to 1898. He received an M.A. from Yale in 1909, and the degree of D.D. from Lebanon Valley College in 1921. After being ordained to the Congregational ministry in 1898 he was pastor of the Plymouth Church, Utica, New York, and of the South Church, Bridgeport, Connecticut, and became Professor of Practical Theology at Yale in 1909, in which post he now continues. He is joint author of *Moral and Religious Training in the School and Home*, *Religion and the War*, *Training the Devotional Life*, *Education for Christian Service*, *Christian Work as a Vocation*, and *The King's Highway Series of Ethical and Religious Readers*.

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Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not high-minded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed.

I Tim. 6:17–19.

Some of the most momentous problems which confront the world are jingling around in your purses this morning. For there are no more burning questions which coming generations will have to settle than those which deal with money, its meaning and its use. Those problems are difficult, for they are not only economic and social, they are moral and religious, and go down to the very foundations of the world's civilization. They are baffling. Minds which wrestle with them bring forth every conceivable type of theory—red, white, and black. Some of these are yellow. They

are delicate. A man's most sensitive nerve runs straight through his pocketbook. When you extract a dollar, he is as keenly alive as if you pulled a tooth. And they are ugly. For if they are left unsolved, or if they are badly solved, the streets of other cities than those of Russia may run red with blood.

The differences which exist between the bank accounts of virtuous and talented and highly productive individuals—not, mark you, between the lazy and the industrious, or between the productive and the non-productive, or between the vicious and the virtuous—are being discussed by wise students of economic conditions. They have also been screamed at us in philippics by soap-box orators and in the red headlines of certain newspapers and magazines. Most people feel that some of this is normal and wholesome, and the rest, however unfortunate, inevitable, so long as we live in this kind of world. We sometimes comfort our consciences with the fact that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Too often the things possess him. Wealth and poverty, we say, both have their share of good and evil, though when we are confronted by the choice, we enthusiastically prefer the evils of wealth.

Whatever risks there are we are prepared to run jubilantly! To many a man hell is the infinite terror of not making money.

For money may be, as even such a pessimist as Schopenhauer confessed, human happiness in the abstract. Ruskin called it a divisible title deed. That is, my money represents power to obtain my share—sometimes more than my share—of food, clothes, education, travel, medical attendance, and a thousand other values which make life worth living. A sixpence, as Carlyle reminds us, makes a man lord over kings and cooks—to the extent of a sixpence! Given enough of these and I can furnish my family with both necessaries and luxuries, and face old age free from fear of the poorhouse and the potter's field. Money, then, may make me the heir to some of the best things in life, even to life itself. On the other hand, too much of it, or the wrong use of it, or lying down on it, makes some men soft and sensual, some idle and vicious, and some tyrannical and cruel. Money is necessary, but so is dirt; and if you have an oversupply of either and do not keep it where it belongs—not on your back, but under your feet—it may cave in on top of you instead of supporting you, and bury you in a more or less uncomfortable grave. Did you

ever note where gold is put in the vision of the heavenly city? It was not where Silas Marner kept his, a prison wall around his heart, but in the pavement of the streets, trodden by the feet of men who had won "the life that is life indeed." William K. Vanderbilt once said that his wealth had robbed him of his right to a career, because so much of what he might have done for himself had been done for him. I do not agree with him, but that is what he is reported to have said.

As for poverty, that has been praised by saints and philosophers in all ages. From Socrates and St. Francis to Tolstoi and Thoreau men have lauded it as the path to holiness, the maker of democracy, the mother of the virtues—thrift, industry, courage, sympathy, and all the rest of that bright throng. But real poverty is having a very different treatment in these days. Nobody praises it. It breeds not only angels, but demons. If it sometimes wears a halo, it also grows horns. While it rouses some to glorious achievement, it deadens and degrades and debauches thousands. For poverty, as Robert Hunter reminds us, is not only the absence of things. A man may live in a log cabin and wear overalls and still be rich. No, poverty is that economic stage so low that a man is undernourished, underclothed, and haunted by

the fear of want. That is a combination which is likely to lead not only to foul air, poor food, dirt, and discomfort, but to vice and crime, and eventually to disease and death. Furthermore, Jacob Riis tells us that in his experience such poverty develops "a dislike of regular work, physical incapability of sustained effort, misdirected love of adventure, gambling propensities, absence of energy, an untrained will, and carelessness of the happiness of others." That covers most of the charges which can be hurled at the vices of the most conscienceless and brutal among the rich. No, wise students of society and lovers of their fellows look upon poverty as a social disease, like tuberculosis, which ought to be diagnosed and cured. It is a social monster, like the minotaur, which should be kept from preying upon human lives until at last it is slain.

Now in the face of such facts the minds of thoughtful men are busy with questions. Students of economics are dealing with the fundamental issues. How ought men to earn money? Are the farmer and the broker, the political ward boss and the lawyer, the teacher and the heir to millions who does nothing but cut off his coupons, all honourable men, belonging in the same economic category? How ought men to spend

money? During the Great War, when thousands of our allies faced destitution and defeat, a "tired business man" walked into the office of a ticket speculator and planked down sixty dollars for six seats to a musical comedy. Now no doubt he needed recreation. Furthermore, the money was his. Legally he might do with it as he chose. Was the transaction, then, blameless? Had he a right morally to spend his money in any such way at that time? How ought men to invest money? If I borrow funds from a bank at six per cent., buy stocks paying eight per cent., and then go about my ordinary occupation, hoping that the stocks will rise in value, have I a perfect right to all that I gain in the transaction—just as clearly and indubitably as if I dug ore from a mine and made steel? Most of us who own stocks and bonds think that we have. Others deny this vigorously. Who is right? Some of the wisest and best of our rich men are finding it difficult to give money away without doing harm as well as good. Now and then—very rarely, however!—a man will even decline to receive it. A few years ago an eccentric youth, who fell heir to a million and a quarter of dollars, refused to accept it. "It is not mine," he is quoted as saying. "I never did anything to earn it. To claim it would be con-

trary to my moral belief and to the teaching of Jesus." Now I am frank to confess that most of us would not even have suspected the existence of such a problem. There is no instrument in any physical or psychological laboratory which would measure the immediacy with which we would not only have received, but jumped at that million and a quarter. Light, with its velocity of 186,000 miles a second, would have been slow in comparison. Even the most scrupulously moral would have recognized the justice of common law, which prevents such sums of money from being left around to be fought for. Moreover, here was a marvellous social opportunity. Someone had to inherit it. Was it wise and brave to decline to accept it as a social trust to be administered honourably for the welfare of his fellows? I am told that the young man was at last induced to adopt this solution of the problem and that his inheritance is being so administered by a board of trustees to-day.

Meanwhile another perplexed multitude is facing the problem from a very different angle, and you and I ought to know it. With them it is no calm discussion of an economic theory; it is a welter of bitterness and of rage as they hunger for their daily bread. Some years ago a group of

students visited the radical headquarters in a certain city, and here are some of the questions which were flung at our heads. Why should honest men, eager to work, wallow in poverty and even starve, when the granaries are full, the farmers are ploughing their apples and cabbages back into the land because to sell them means an actual loss, and the number of millionaires is increasing? Look at that social butterfly, that parasitic flapper, who never did a stroke of honest work in her life, never means to, and is proud of it! By what right does she wear a hundred-thousand-dollar necklace and loaf in luxury while thousands of mothers walk the streets of England, vainly looking for the chance to scrub floors, lest their babies, left alone at home, die for want of milk? Makers of statistics are not quieting their restlessness. They know that if a man earned ten dollars a day—which is probably more than the amount received by the average doctor, lawyer, and shopkeeper, to say nothing of the artist, musician, teacher, and minister—and spent absolutely nothing—nothing for food, nothing for clothes, nothing for education, amusement, or even the luxury of being buried, how long would it take him to earn a million dollars? A little space of two hundred and

seventy-four years; and to accomplish that feat he would need to take up his occupation the day he was born and work Sundays and holidays! As for a billion dollars, which some men are reputed to be worth, if he received five dollars a day, he would be kept busy under the same thrifty régime about 548,000 years. Some time ago a social student calculated, with how much accuracy I do not know, that one per cent. of the families of our country owned more wealth than all the rest of the nation put together. Why should this be, those radicals asked us? Is that one per cent. more talented, more useful, more valuable than the brains and the brawn of the other ninety-nine per cent.? That is nonsense, of course; but such was the question with which they confronted us. Professor Rauschenbusch used to say that it was possible to assemble around one table a group of men who could control the mobile wealth of one hundred millions of people, and a Chicago financier admitted it. Speaking to a gathering of bankers in 1911 he is reported to have said: "I believe that the money power now lies in the hands of a dozen men; and in the last analysis I plead guilty to being one of that dozen."

Such pictures, whether reliable photographs

or sensational cartoons, suggest some of the problems which cluster around money. This is neither the time nor the place to discuss economic theories. Jesus never allied his gospel with any of them. His whole interest was directed toward developing sons of God living in a society which should incarnate love and truth and beauty and righteousness; and no economic theory—capitalism or socialism or communism—has any monopoly of these values, or can rightfully be identified with the gospel of Christ. There are capitalistic saints and communistic devils, and there are capitalistic devils and communistic saints. As followers of Jesus we are interested solely in discovering, if possible, how his mind should guide us in this tremendously important matter. If we are Christians, what principles should govern us in all our private and public finances? How must we earn, and spend, and invest, and distribute our money, if we are really to grow Christlike characters and to build his kind of world?

Whatever your theory of the person of Jesus, he is unquestionably the supreme teacher of morals. It is not only the Church which claims this. It is admitted by philosophers like John Stuart Mill, who made no religious profession

whatever; by ruthless conquerors and egotists like Napoleon; by statesmen like Earl Grey; by business statisticians like Roger W. Babson, and by mystics like Ghandi. It is fair to say that it is the Prophet of Nazareth to whom the great majority of our ethical leaders are turning to-day. What, then, would be his message concerning our modern economic situation? What has Jesus to say to the money-makers of our age?

Apparently much and little; some things radical and some things conservative. His teachings abound in sententious sayings packed with wisdom when rightly interpreted, but bursting with madness and folly when played with by madmen and fools. Jesus himself knew the lot of a poor man. His family belonged to the labouring class. Save in his childhood and during his career, when his followers supported him, he probably never possessed a coin which he did not earn. To the beggars in Jerusalem he had little to give save himself and his teachings. When he died, he had nothing to bequeath to his mother but his friend. The only spoils which his enemies could divide were his garments, and he was buried in a borrowed tomb. All this reminds one of John Wesley, who left as his personal effects only two silver spoons—and these were in different parts

of England—and the copyright of his books, which he vested in the Methodist Society.

Now Jesus steadfastly declined to lay down hard-and-fast rules in regard to economic questions. When quarrelling heirs appealed to him to arbitrate, he declined to do so, simply warning them against greed and materialism. When his foes set clever traps in regard to the payment of taxes, he told them to render unto Cæsar the things which were Cæsar's, and unto God the things which were God's. Jesus never attacked private property. He never claimed that all men should be equally rewarded. On the contrary, he declared that the ten-talented man had a perfect right to the other ten talents, if he earned them; though in the final reckoning both principal and earnings belonged to the original owner, who had intrusted them to the steward for a brief season. As for the man with one talent, if he declined to use the fund wisely and productively, even that ought to be taken away and given to the man who had the ten. Jesus did say: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of Heaven"; and it is hard, as any rich man knows. But he never said that it was impossible, and it is a deal harder for the very poor. He did picture Dives as in hell and Lazarus as in heaven;

but that was not because Dives was rich, but because he was negligent and selfish and inhuman. Furthermore, Lazarus is pictured as being "in Abraham's bosom," and Abraham was one of the richest men of his times. Jesus did tell the rich young ruler to sell all that he had, give to the poor, and come and follow him; but that was because the young man's riches were spoiling his best self and his noblest career. For wealthy Christians to do this to-day would be the quintessence of futility and of folly, though even that would be better than the utter failure of many to administer their possessions as a social trust. Moreover, Jesus did not tell another rich man, Zacchæus, to give away all that he had; and when the reformed tax-gatherer promised to use the wealth honestly and generously, Jesus said that salvation was come to his house. Search the reported sayings through, and you will find no teachings dealing with free trade, or the tariff, or single tax, or excess profits. Jesus was not a capitalist; but neither was he a socialist or a communist. He never said that men ought not to make money; he merely warned them lest the making of money unmake men. Money is valuable, but it can be bought at too dear a price. No, all that we find in the teaching of

Jesus is the principle of love applied to economic conditions. To him the supreme thing was stewardship. According to his principles no man is the absolute owner of his money. He is a steward under God in the service of his fellows; and the larger his bank account, the greater are both his opportunity and his responsibility. That would seem, would it not, to be a combination of sound common sense, good morals, and pure religion? In saving your soul it is never necessary to lose your head!

Now if you grant that principle, some truths in regard to the meaning and use of money are inescapable. First of all, what is money? A man goes out into the street and sells his labour as a ditch-digger. At the end of the day a number of coins are placed in his hands. What are those coins? They are not mere lumps of metal. They represent a day of his life—his time, his strength, his brain, himself—valued and minted, promissory notes entitling him to demand from the treasury of society an equivalent amount of service in life. Viewed in this way, a nickel is one of the most sacred things in the world. Shall I treat a bit of my coined self as a trifle to be bandied about lightly? Often it is the lives of our fathers and mothers that are jingling around in

our pockets. Are bad books and shameful pleasures and wrecked careers to be the things for which we exchange the heart's blood of those we love? Whenever you deal in money, you are dealing in life, somebody's life! To raise or lower wages in a factory, to juggle with the price of stocks, to make or break a contract in the coal fields, to squander or hoard a legacy, to budget your income for the year—all that means less life or more life, a better life or a worse life, for somebody. Surely it behooves a man who desires to be just and brotherly—more yet one who professes to follow Jesus—to have a care how he traffics in life!

More than this. For whoever may manage by hook or by crook to lay his fingers on money, those coins seem to find their true social significance, their fundamental meaning, in the hands of him who earns them. It goes without saying that we may honourably receive them from those who have earned them—friends, parents, or distant ancestors. To be the heir of a rich father is a glorious privilege, if we make it so; but it is also a tremendous responsibility, a solemn and awful trust. If through the thrift and industry of our forbears the world can be induced to give us a living, every honest man and every honest

woman will at least attempt to pay that debt by returning to the world the service of a life. A wilful, able-bodied, social parasite, millionaire or hobo, is a thief and a robber. No doubt society will learn how to do away with both of them in good time.

For ordinarily and normally money is and ought to be a symbol of service. The tailor prepares clothes for the shoemaker, and the shoemaker protects the feet of the tailor; and both profit in the exchange of services. Never forget that in every honest transaction both sides gain! But now look at bribe-taking politicians and industrial grafters, such as have been exposed in various parts of our country recently, or stock jugglers and investment sharpers—not honest brokers, mark you!—who are out to rob the public and to fleece the lambs—you and me! Those men have rendered no social equivalent for the services which their ill-gotten bank accounts are able to exact from others. In their hands the coins are liars that have lost their souls. Every time such men buy a beefsteak or go to the theatre they are social highwaymen. The same thing is true of the profiteer, and the shyster lawyer, and the quack doctor, and the gambler. It is true of the employer who robs the

employee of his rightful share of the earnings of the factory—and I have not the slightest idea what that is; and it is true of the employee who robs the employer by demanding more wages than constitute his rightful share—and I have not the slightest idea what that is. To learn how to make a dollar mean a dollar's worth of service, and to see to it that no one gets ten dollars for one dollar's worth of service and that no one gets one dollar for ten dollars' worth of service—that is one of the greatest tasks, not only economic and social, but ethical and religious, which confront civilization. How did you acquire the dollars in your pocket—by gift, or by labour, or by gambling, or by grafting, or by stealing? According to the mind of Jesus are those coins rightfully yours?

Another fact which the user of money must face is that the buyer is always a manufacturer. Through his demand he creates what he buys. The man who takes from a newsboy some yellow journal, whose pages are bespattered with the latest scandals and crimes and horrors, practically writes a letter to the editor, saying: "That's the kind of newspaper I want in America! I'll help you print it!" Whereupon the editor, feeling the force of that reader's demand, writes back:

"Good! Here's a new one!" And the next morning another mess of literary and moral garbage is delivered to the purchaser's door. Many reputable citizens feel no qualms of conscience when they buy seats for coarse plays and bespangled indecencies in the theatre. They claim that, so far as they are concerned, little or no harm comes from these entertainments. They enjoy the colour and movement, laugh at the so-called humour—some of it terribly so called! —regret or ignore the salacious suggestions, thrill with the shocks which the dialogue or the drama furnishes them, and return to their homes much the same as when they came away. Whether such an evening harms them or not, however—and it seems as if a spectator would need to have the brains of an oyster and the hide of a dinosaur to sit unaffected through certain plays presented to the public—one thing is certain. Every time that these people purchase tickets to entertainments of that order they become to that extent joint stock producers. For if people—not bad people, but persons as morally sound and intellectually high-minded as you and I—did not throng the box office, such plays would be withdrawn within a week. Why not buy an aigrette in the shop window? The bird has been slain,

and someone will wear that tuft of feathers! Simply because just so long as anyone purchases that aigrette, another mother heron will be shot, another tuft of feathers, torn from her breast, will adorn another shop window, while another brood of baby herons starve to minister to another thoughtless human being's pride. What a man buys, that he helps to manufacture! All of us are to some extent responsible for industries which we have never seen, corporations in which we own no shares, occupations in which we have never taken part. Too many men who complain about the bootlegger are creating the bootlegger. What are you manufacturing as you spend your money—good books or bad, clean plays or foul, drunkenness or sobriety, the kingdom of all that is personified in the word "devil," or the kingdom of all that Jesus proclaimed in the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God?

Sacred because it represents minted life, sacred because it is a medium for the exchange of honourable and loving service, sacred because it creates what it buys, and sacred because of its tremendous power for weal or for woe—that is the last fact with which I would face you in this study of a coin. If the nickel in your pocket could speak, what a life history, packed with comedy

and with tragedy, with Christlikeness and with devilishness, it would tell! In the course of its brief career it has shared in every kind of deed, from caresses to crimes. One day it bought bread for a Michael Pupin, an unknown immigrant boy in danger of starvation; the next it helped to put a pistol into the pocket of a gunman and to intoxicate a man who murdered his wife. It has played its part in healing the sick and in teaching the ignorant; it has also been instrumental in ruining a home and in bringing on a war. The thought of how some men and women are spending their money—and that means exercising power, remember!—in this critical age is terrible—wrecking bodies, their own and those of their fellows, trampling upon children, debauching morals, breaking down laws, degrading human standards, bestializing characters, and in every way causing minted life to minister to disease and death. But if this is shocking, it is glorious to remember a host of others who are making a magnificent use of the tremendous power stored up in their money. Never was there so much clean business, such devoted stewardship, such boundless generosity, such wise and Christlike use of money in the history of the

world. All the schools and libraries, the hospitals and orphanages; all the beauty of art, the melody of music, the glory of architecture; not only the charities, but the noble industries and professions which are better than charities and which bless multitudes ceaselessly and unconsciously—all this is something to make glad the mind of man and to rejoice the heart of God. What a superhuman power, what a divine trust, we all have! Some of us will earn or inherit much, some little; but the poorest of us will have enough to make a home happy or miserable, to lift a life or to roll it in the gutter, to glorify earth or to degrade it, to hasten or to hinder that social order which we call the kingdom of God.

There are various ways of estimating a man's character, his social value, his religion; but is there any test more searching, more true, than the way he earns and spends his money? The question is often asked in regard to some educational, or industrial, or political leader, "Is he a Christian?" Now there are widely differing conceptions and various standards which may be applied to him. Does he belong to this church or that? Is he a fundamentalist or a modernist? Are his sympathies with the Westminster Con-

fession or with the Thirty-nine Articles? Has he been immersed, as a Baptist, or sprinkled, as a Congregationalist, or neither, as a Quaker? I often wonder what would happen to Peter and James and John if such standards were applied to them! Did you ever picture Peter, the unlettered boatman, who knew more about fish than philosophy, trying to say the Athanasian Creed? We are not dealing lightly with these sacred things. They are important, even though Jesus founded no Christian sect, sponsored none of the warring types of theology, never saw one of the Church's creeds, never demanded assent to them, never commended them to a living soul. But one thing is certain. If you had asked Jesus whether this or that individual was worthy to be enrolled among his followers, he would have cared far less to be informed on any of these matters than to know how the man made and spent and invested and shared his money. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Very well! How much love—that mind of Jesus—do we put into making and spending and investing and acting as God's stewards over a coin?

The Christian interpretation and use of money? How simple it all seems! But how wide and how

far it reaches! Every penny which you and I possess is a double trust; a trust from the Giver of every good and perfect gift, to whom belong all the silver and the gold, and who lends them to us, together with a multitude of other good things, for a season; and a trust from our fellows, without whose coöperation it could not be earned, and without whose permission it could not be spent. Millions of us have all too vivid memories of the rates of exchange attached at various times to German marks and Russian roubles, while the value of the dollar is far from stabilized and guaranteed for all time. The coins in my purse are mine to-day. They may belong to a dozen unknown persons to-morrow. But while they are mine, I am settling my own destiny and the destiny of countless others. In my spending I am writing not only my autobiography, but some interesting passages in the history of mankind.

Are these principles ethical common sense, or are they moral moonshine? Are they truly in accord with the mind of Jesus, or are they the vapourings of a well-meaning but ignorant piety, religious meddling with the practical affairs of the real world? This much at least is true. If they are mist and moonshine, they ought to be ban-

ished by a flood of sunlight; if they are pure religion and common sense, they ought to regulate the use of our money throughout all the years that are to come. Are you willing to adopt them—to scrutinize your cash account with the mind of Christ every morning and to balance your books in the presence of God every night? Surely, surely at the close of every financial transaction, whether it involves thirty cents or thirty millions of dollars, you and I ought to be able to look into the face of every man, woman, and child without shame, and straight up into the eyes of God without fear! God grant us wisdom and courage to earn honestly, to spend conscientiously, to invest nobly, and to give away generously as stewards of God and friends of Jesus all the wealth which may ever be intrusted to us! Only so shall we follow one who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be exceeding rich. Only so shall we win for ourselves and share with others "the life which is life indeed."

Prayer

Eternal God, Giver of every good and perfect gift, all the gold and the silver are Thine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills are Thine, and the world is Thine, and we are Thine. Nothing would be ours, if Thou hadst not first given it to us. Grant us grace to be good stewards of all Thy bounties, we beseech Thee—of life and health, of wisdom and power, of home and happiness, of the riches which our hands can handle, and of those invisible and eternal riches which Thou dost impart to those who share the mind of Christ.

Deliver us, O God of love, from the callous greed which seeks ease or gain at the cost of the misery of others. Let not our ruthless love of luxury crush the bodies of children, or embitter the hearts of weary mothers and of needlessly burdened men. Save us from the sin of cursing the world instead of blessing it in all our getting and spending, and grant that we may never squander minted life thoughtlessly and selfishly, or debauch its power until it ministers not to spiritual health and wholeness, but to wretchedness and disease and death.

Let thy spirit of self-impartation, most gracious God, dwell within us richly. Day by day give us grace to walk in the path of Jesus, who owned

nothing for himself, but everything for all. Thus may we hasten the coming of the time when we shall so master the forces of nature as we win the world's wealth, that we shall at last master the forces of human society until the nations are made rich in Thy wealth. So shall we fulfil the hope of the ages when we and all men shall possess and be possessed by the largeness, the beauty, the joy and the power of the life which is life indeed. Amen.

THE GREAT DIVIDE

ALBERT PARKER FITCH

MINISTER OF THE PARK AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
NEW YORK CITY

THOUGHTFUL students in the colleges of the east and middle west have for many years been stimulated by the preaching of Albert Parker Fitch. His deep humanism and his capacity for psychological analysis are evident in this sermon as in all his preaching. He is a master of ordered discourse and is one of those who have sought to recapture beauty and art for the high purposes of the spirit.

At Yale in 1920 he delivered the Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching under the title *Preaching and Paganism.*

Some of his most important books are: *The College Course and the Preparation for Life, Religion and the Undergraduate, Can the Church Survive in the Changing Order?, Preaching and Paganism,* and *None So Blind.*

Dr. Fitch was born in Boston in 1877. He spent his college days at Harvard, prepared for the ministry at Union Theological Seminary, and Amherst and Williams have placed him among their Doctors of Divinity.

As a Congregational minister he served in Flushing, New York, and at the Mt. Vernon Church, Boston. From 1909 to 1917 he was President of Andover Theological Seminary, Cambridge. From 1917 to 1923 he was Professor of the History of Religion at Amherst College, after which he became Professor of the History of Religion at Carleton College. In February of 1928 he became minister of the Park Avenue Presbyterian Church of New York City.

THE GREAT DIVIDE

ALBERT PARKER FITCH

The best evidence of the truth of any story is internal. Some narratives are self-verifying. They carry their own proof in their sure appeal to our understanding, their quick revelation of some eternal fact which we have known in our own experience.

It is so with the account of the baptism and temptation of Jesus. Here was a man of thirty, sensitive, reflective, supremely gifted. Everywhere, in his day, the kingdom was expected, the imminent rule of the Father, Lord of heaven and earth. Living in little Nazareth, from whose slopes he could look down on the ancient battle fields of his nation, he brooded over these things. He was well read in the Law and the Prophets, and in those formative years, as a carpenter at the bench, as a quiet listener in the synagogue, he pondered, with those half-articulate, half-mystical intuitions of genius, over the history and destiny of his people.

One day came the news of John the Baptist

preaching the quick coming of the Kingdom, baptizing men and women in preparation for it. Something stirs in Jesus. He wants to see this John; he goes, also, to be baptized. Then the long process of self-searching culminates in a crisis, under the shock of contact with this rugged, provocative older man. John brings to self-consciousness Jesus' latent genius; he reveals Jesus to himself. He himself is destined to be herald and leader of the new Kingdom; so authentic is the revelation of his sublime mission that he hears his Father's sanction sounding like an external and audible Voice. When he descends into the water he bids farewell to his former life. When he comes up out of it he is another man.

And then is he "driven by the Spirit into the wilderness." How true to all human experience! This revelation of his mission and of his destiny in the world has been so overwhelming that he must get away—away from all human beings, away to some place where he can be alone with himself, adjust himself to the new understanding, the new outlook, the new purpose in life. The Spirit always drives men into the wilderness when they must make a turn in the road, go in another direction, become acquainted with a new voice in their souls. And in the wilderness there comes

to him the temptation which is universal to all gifted and significant human beings. The essence of that temptation is not found in the three typically Jewish stories which merely illustrate it. It was not a temptation merely to satisfy physical hunger with miraculous bread; it was not a temptation to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple merely to make his powers the tool of his vanity. It was the temptation to self-skepticism; to doubt whether or not this new, high experience, the untried, perilous road it called him into, was real.

Could there be anything more diabolical than the words put into the mouth of Satan—"*If* thou be the Son of God? I say, Jesus, how do you know? You think, now, that you are the chosen leader of your people; you think you are to be a new Moses to lead them out of the wilderness. But who else would ever think so? You are nothing but a carpenter-builder. The kind of a kingdom you have in mind is an internal, spiritual, and universal one; the kind of leadership which Judah wants is external, material, and temporal. Don't you think you are making a fool of yourself? This is a crazy thing for a man to do—to leave an honest and honourable trade and proclaim himself the unwanted leader in a

cause which he thinks of in unwanted terms! *If* thou be the Son of God. But—how can you *know?* Wouldn't it be well to see first if you could do some physical and external marvel to prove the worth of the spiritual and internal experience? Of course if you could turn a stone into bread you could prove in advance that your ideas were right. It wouldn't be so very risky then. But you had better play safe. Don't nail your flag to the mast; don't cross your Rubicon. Better be safe than sorry. It's easier to start a thing than to stop it. All your elders and betters are going to be against you. What folly at your age to think you know more than they! Of course you have power. Why not, then, give up this idea of tilting windmills; give them what they want, and carve out a real career for yourself! Yes, you'd better look before you leap. Wait a while. Think it over."

But Jesus, wrung with the conflict, resists the temptation. He puts behind him the fear, the doubt; he trusts the voice of God in his own soul. And, having taken his leap in the dark, makes his decision; then the inward surety and peace flood back into his heart. Angels do indeed minister unto him as he returns, in the power of the Spirit, into Galilee. He has crossed his Great Divide.

Does one need to say anything more? How startling in its truth and insight is the story! This sort of thing is always happening to human beings. We think the long, long thoughts of youth. We dream along the edges of the undiscovered country. Then we go to college and we —wake up! In the fresh contact with new and understanding friends, under the stimulus of some wise and provocative teacher, or by coming up against the personal crises of our own maturing life we see what we are, what we might do, what we may, if we dare, become. Then follows always the devil's own temptation. We distrust the inner voice; we are afraid to follow our light. It always means breaking with something in the past: old habits that have claimed us, or the expectations of our parents, or the approval of, and continued popularity with, our friends. Am I a son of God? Have I the stuff to build my life on my deepest convictions? That mixture of self-skepticism and fear has spoiled the promise of thousands of young lives. It makes us choose safe and innocuous obscurity rather than dangerous and glorious distinction. We see the vision but on it, through cowardice and the pressure of the crowd, we close the heart.

And the temptation takes the same form,

even in detail, as with Jesus. First we are lured to try to prove in advance, by some way the world recognizes, that we are right. So the tempter does not say, "make stones into bread"; he modernizes the language: "Make your pile first. You have a vision of what's needed to change our industrial, our political, our moral order. But suppose it's all moonshine—fatuous dream of inexperience and youth! Prove yourself in the world's market place first. Get wealth. Put money in your purse! Thus you can show that you have something great to give the world." And you say, "Yes, when I am rich then I will give up all this compromise and do as my heart bids and follow my light." And so it never gets done.

I want to dwell, for a moment, on how universally this temptation to fear and personal skepticism has us in its grip. Think, for a moment, on what slaves undergraduates are to community opinion!

Some years ago I was preaching at one of the large preparatory schools here in the East and had arrived on a Saturday evening when a dance was in progress. The boys were in their most meticulous evening clothes; the girls had arrived in their brilliant and abbreviated attire. The

mother of one of these boys, who had come all the way from California to see her son, had the poor taste to arrive at the very moment when the other boys and girls were in evidence. She came forward with her arms open to embrace her offspring but the lad put out three languid fingers and shook hands with her saying, "Hello, Mother." Afterward when she expostulated, "Why didn't you kiss me, Son?" he said, "But the best boys don't do it." It was ridiculous but it was also pitiable. You see the devil had got him; he didn't dare be himself.

I have taught undergraduates for nearly twenty years. How often I have sat around the fire with them of an evening and listened to their independent thinking about the future life after college days should be over, heard their trenchant and constructive criticism of the American life outside the college gates. But have they been equally willing to follow their conscience, to respect their mind, when fraternity and campus problems, that cried aloud for their solution, were brought up? For the most part, no! Of course, they are going to stand for what they know and believe in the *future*, but not yet—not yet. So they do not dare cross their Great Divide.

Or again: one of the most inspiring and dis-

heartening sights in this world is the faces of the student body on Commencement Day. Here are the seniors, leaving college keen for adventure, sure they have something new and fresh to give the world—many of them with that disinterested, critical approach to the problems of our present world which is invaluable in its insight and creative power. Then one meets these same men two or three years afterward in the club, at dinners, or in the Pullman smoker. And what has happened? They have become ordinary, respectable, dulled human beings. What has happened is that they have not dared to trust their inner understanding, or they have gradually succumbed to the pressure of standardized living, the group ambitions, the material concerns of all those about them. Once on some day in college they heard a voice saying, "You are My beloved son." Then they heard another voice saying, "*Are* you now—really!" And they were afraid and didn't follow their own inner light.

Often one sees this same thing among teachers, professors, ministers, and among all the dilettantes as well. Their minds have yielded to this temptation. They love to analyze human problems, they make magnificent armchair counsellors, doctrinaire philosophers. They indulge in

keen but irresponsible and futile talk, because for a long while they have never intended to *do* anything about it. So now they have lost the power to put into life the ideas which once engrossed them. The fact is, they have been afraid of life and afraid of ideas, which really means they have been afraid of their own selves. They did not believe truly that they were "sons of God." The devil has got them.

Perhaps we yield worst to this temptation in our personal lives. For every one of us, at some time, the Voice has said: "Here is the way; walk ye in it." And we knew we ought, we knew we could; we were unhappy because we didn't. But the price was too great. Ambition or bodily desire, or craving for cheap praise and quick success intervened and we turned away. For every one of us at some time the Voice has said: "Stop, you cannot do this thing." But we wanted to, and we were afraid of the consequences if we became come-outers and pioneers. The trail looked too steep, too lonely. So we made our minds not our friends but our accomplices, and used our brains to defend the low, not to find the high. Some months ago George Jean Nathan wrote a bitter, almost contemptuous, article in the *Mercury* on the so-called radicalism of

American undergraduates. He said, for substance, that it simply doesn't exist. That he had followed the lives of a great many free and able and courageous minds, as they seemed to be, in college, after they were out in the world. And that, with very rare exceptions, they settled down quickly into Babbittry. It was all talk, all crusading when there was no responsibility and no personal consequences attached. When it came to the pinch and young Americans had to stand up to be counted they were pretty sure that God was on the side of the stronger battalions!

It is a humiliating indictment. But when we look at the political inertia, the cynical acceptance of civic corruption, international irresponsibility, the moral and religious conventional living of our time we know there is a significant measure of truth in it. We do not return to our Galilee from our forty days' sojourn within the sheltering academic walls with much power of the Spirit. Moreover, the youth of your generation have come to the Kingdom in an especial sense for just such a day as ours. Ten years ago the World War was ended. That war revealed the ghastly conditions in Western civilization.

Its causes as distinguished from its occasions were the imperialistic spirit, the cynical belief that might is right, which pervaded the political, economic, social life of my generation. It was we, the elder leaders of the West, who brought on the war; it was your brothers, the youth, who paid the price for it. You have the right and you have the obligation to make a better world than you are inheriting from us. As Walter Lippman once said, "Do not look upon the past as your jailer but as your liberator. Do not sink," he said, "beneath the weight of its gloomy sanctity but expand in the light of its infinite variety." Launch out, then, into the deep; go forward; don't accept our present world; resolve that you will make a better one.

One final word to those who, in the strength and by the grace of the Lord Jesus, have conquered the tempter as did he—one final word as you say, "What I dare to dream of I will dare to do!" Be free; trust that higher inward light; be courageous; do not fear the face of man.

"Charge once more, then, and be dumb.
Let the victors, when they come,
And the forts of folly fall,
Find thy body by the wall!"

And then, only then, when you have proved your freedom and your courage, be prudent. For you will learn, if you do battle for living truth against entrenched and ancient error, that in quietness and confidence, in persistence and patience, shall be your strength. You remember what William Lloyd Garrison, the great Abolitionist, once said: "I will not retreat. I will not equivocate, and I will be heard." As Jesus returned from that long vigil to his native town, there to take up the career that ended in the Cross—but the career that has set men free—he might almost have repeated to himself the words that Tennyson puts into the mouth of Ulysses: "My purpose holds to sail beyond the sunset and the paths of all the western stars until I die." For his was the temper of the heroic heart, soon to be made weak by Time and Fate but strong in will "to seek, to strive, to find and not to yield."

May that be your temper and your purpose, too.

Prayer

O God, the King of Men, the Lord of Youth, without whom we can do nothing but with whom we can do anything, help us, by Thy grace, to clean-minded and true-hearted living so that when

school is over and our work begun, and we join in the fight for all high and holy things, we may continue steadfastly in the same till our life's end. Save us from our easily besetting sins; slothfulness of mind, neglect of soul, indifference to the rights and needs of others. In the hour of bodily desire, when the inner light grows dim and darkness steals across the mind, make us to remember those we love and to fix our wills on purity and honour and truth. Help us to fight the good fight and grant us the light and peace of moral victory for our reward. May we rejoice in each day's work and play, revering ourselves, our fellow men, and Thee. So may we come to the evening time at last, undismayed and undishonoured.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE DEMAND FOR REALITY

ROBERT RUSSELL WICKS

DEAN OF THE CHAPEL, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Robert Russell Wicks became dean of Princeton's new chapel in the fall of 1928, and therewith entered upon a ministry of unique interest. His is the task of capturing the imagination of a university population with the help of a noble Gothic edifice seating two thousand persons. Music, prayer, and preaching will be introduced in harmony with the beauty of the architecture and the diversified backgrounds of the student worshippers. At the centre of Dr. Wicks' programme will be a pastoral and an informal teaching ministry for which he has become so well qualified in his fourteen years as minister of the Second Congregational Church of Holyoke, Massachusetts, and three years as chaplain of Mt. Holyoke College.

Dr. Wicks possesses gifts which enable him to capture, hold, and move a congregation. He is able to meet students on their own ground and to show them how deeply religious they often are without knowing it by that name. This sermon was his first one at Princeton and shows his characteristic approach to the student mind.

He was born in Utica, New York, in 1882; graduated from Hamilton College in 1904, and from Union Seminary in 1908. He was ordained to the Congregational ministry, and was pastor of the Arlington Avenue Presbyterian Church of East Orange, New Jersey, from 1908 to 1914; then became pastor of the Second Congregational Church of Holyoke, Massachusetts.

Dr. Wicks received the degree of D.D. from Hamilton College in 1919, Williams in 1925, and Yale in 1926.

THE DEMAND FOR REALITY

ROBERT RUSSELL WICKS

LET us think together of life's demand for reality. To show how long standing this demand has been I would recall to your mind a sentence in the Forty-second Psalm, written centuries ago: "They continually say to me 'Where is thy God?'" When anyone who has taken religion for granted is pinned right down by that definite question, he is likely to find that his religion is a very vague affair.

Vagueness has always been the disturbing weakness in the average man's religion. It is a revealing experience to ask a group of young people if they can put their finger upon any occasion in the past week of which they could naturally say, "There God came into life." In nine cases out of ten their confusion is complete. To multitudes of youth, God is a vague, imaginary idea in the back of their minds, quite unrecognized in the everyday affairs of life. And older people are often in the same state of un-

certainty. There are plenty of parents who, in bringing up their children, feel as Charles Lamb did when he jokingly remarked, "I am resolved that my children shall be brought up in their father's religion if they can find out what it is."

Now what can be done to find something definite and real amidst all this vagueness? The orthodox fundamentalist would meet this situation by saying, "Take what authority says. That is perfectly clear. Believe that." Such an assertion may help a certain type of mind but it has left many people unsatisfied and even rebellious. The modern liberal, coming to the rescue, has tried another way. He says, "If you cannot accept authority, just *assume* that there is a God. Live as though there were one." This sounds scientific and there is some truth in it, of course, but it gives nothing definite with which to begin.

Probably the best way, which Jesus generally followed, is to start with the unrecognized religion which every man lives by in his best moments. A homely illustration might make this clear. Fancy a motorist stalled on a back country road in a fog, with his fuel tank empty. A man of fundamentalist habit of mind might say to him: "There is a filling station four miles ahead in the fog where you cannot see it. The guide book says

so. Believe in that filling station and you will be saved." You see where that leaves the driver. Or suppose a man of liberal habit of mind should say: "Perhaps you do not trust the authority of the guide book; just assume that there is a filling station somewhere in the fog and drive as though there were one." You see where that leaves the driver. But now suppose you could discover under the seat a spare gallon of fuel which had been unnoticed. You could then say, "Here is some of the real thing which you have overlooked. While you are assuming that there may be more ahead, get started with this and you will come, as the guide book says, to a larger supply farther on." Of course one might not always find that spare gallon under the seat, but in life one can always find some unrecognized religion in the best moments of any man who has lived above the level of the beast. This was the method of the greatest master of men.

Look then to these best moments. What happens there that should remind one of religion? *Our life is mastered by a spirit that has no selfish end in view.* Some might balk at that word spirit. But never mind definitions. Whatever we call it, there is an influence or an urge that captures us in those best moments when self is put aside.

Down in the East Side slums of New York a cultured gentleman has been living for some twenty years, in a boys' club which he founded and which has now grown to over seven thousand members, taken from the toughest boys in that section. That man could have lived in the suburbs, for he was a man of means; but some urge of responsibility for those neglected boys carried him into the slums to give his life with no selfish end in view. A college student who had been working with him confessed to a friend: "I do not understand the Church's teaching about salvation, but whatever it is that takes this man down into the slums has certainly gotten me."

This is exactly the sort of thing which Jesus pointed out in his parable of the Good Samaritan. That Samaritan was not to blame for the plight of the man whom robbers had left by the side of the road; and he had nothing to gain by giving the time to help. But a strange sense of guilt for a condition that was not as it ought to be took him out of his way to set that condition right. In Jesus' view, that which lifts a man out of himself and makes him concerned for something better that ought to be, anywhere and everywhere, is the spirit of the living God laying hold on human life. He said that what he knew about God

was something so simple that a child could understand it. This of course is not all there is to know about God, the Infinite. But this knowledge is at least something very definite, without which all other knowledge will prove misleading.

Some may not call this God, but whatever the name we must agree that this disinterested spirit of concern for all that is not as it should be is the most alert and significant thing in all modern life. Professor Hocking of Harvard points to this as the reassertion of the spirit of religion amid the general decline of conventional belief. And certainly here is something which is as real as gravity, and which is in no danger of being doubted out of the universe.

For the rest of the time to-day let us connect this reality with a fundamental problem which people in college circles are apt to overlook—the problem of handling selfishness. Is it possible to create an unselfish spirit by will power alone? If this congregation should take a vote on that question, the result would show a chaotic muddle of opinion. How are we trying to handle selfishness? We are all experimenting in one way or another.

Some of the time we try the method of restraint. But holding in a selfish desire only makes

it more persistent. Once there was a city boy who went to visit his country cousin on the farm. After being in all sorts of mischief, the two boys finally disappeared for a long time. No one could locate them until the uncle was asked if he knew where they were. He replied, "Where did you tell them *not* to go?" The forbidden place was where they were found. When we tell our selfish desires where not to go, that is the place where they persistently make their way.

Experiencing this failure, some of us, all of us, try the method of concealment. In the home where I used to live a certain portion of the care-taking fell to my lot. My main effort was unconsciously put upon the areas that were most in sight—the walks where people passed, the lawn which neighbours viewed from over the way, the front porch and the front hall where visitors got first impressions. But you should have seen the cellar! I never wanted my most intimate and understanding friends to have a sight of that. So in life we make respectable the part which shows but there is a cellar somewhere in which all our secret selfishness is hidden away, *unconquered*. We are more frank to-day to talk about that cellar. We call it by nice names like "self-expression." But it is the cellar just the same.

So, then, if neither restraint nor concealment can meet the situation, how do we get life mastered by this unselfish spirit? In our best moments we have been so mastered, selfish though our ordinary life may be. Let us take the word of an atheist, like Bertrand Russell, on this point. The testimony of a religious person might be suspected of traditional bias. Mr. Russell has to admit that this unselfish spirit is *something received, not made*. When he came to bring up his children, he discovered that he could not force a child to love unselfishly. No command or compulsion or direct action could accomplish that. One could simply surround a child with unselfish, friendly, loving people; and the child would somehow catch the thing. Just so. That spirit is received not made. Jesus used a very suggestive simile when he likened the spirit to the wind. No sailor attempts to make the wind. That is a force which is given in the universe. But the sailor uses his will and his brains to receive the wind in his sail. So the Christlike spirit, reappearing through our human race as from sources inexhaustible, is a given thing in the universe. It is to be received, not made. It is a more personal influence than wind and does to life what natural forces cannot do. Here is an influence which pur-

sues us while we are yet in our sin. Something there is, higher and better than ourselves, which is ever on our trail and never lets us go. And we must use all the will and all the brains we have to keep surrendered to that spirit in the varied adventures of our life. This technique of surrender is the technique of religion which Christianity affirms is the one hope of the world.

Now in closing let me say that this business of surrendering life is no mere pious cant. We are surrendering life to something all the time—often to the wrong thing. And this process of getting ourselves surrendered to God's unselfish spirit is what we live by at our best. Most of us began the process by admiring the Christlike spirit in our mother. That sort of admiration is unresisting surrender to the spirit we believe in. Sir Thomas Browne in his *Religio Medici* says somewhere, "I have practised the honest art of Seneca and in my retired and solitary imaginations, to detain me from the foulness of vice, have fancied to myself the presence of my dear and worthiest friends before whom I should lose my head rather than be vicious." All honest men have thus saved themselves over and over by this surrender of admiration.

But admiration is not all. If it is real, it must go on to imitation. When we have the grit to follow some unselfish line of action, perhaps against our inclination, we soon "get into the spirit of it"—which is another way of saying that the spirit is taking hold of us. It is like a swimmer finding his energy reënforced as he works himself into a current that helps to carry him along.

And the whole practice of surrender seems to be peculiarly deepened in the experience of being suffered for. During the war the sense of being died for produced in all of us a desire for a sacrificial spirit in our own lives. Whoever loves and suffers for us makes us feel we ought to love. Nobody can explain why we feel that way and no one can prove that we ought to; but if someone pays the price of showing us the self-giving spirit of God, our nature feels itself in the presence of that for which we were made. The effect of Christ's life down through the centuries has always operated in this familiar area of admiration and imitation, and in the experience of being suffered for. Since his day we have never discovered any new way of handling selfishness. In this man on the cross we have come to recognize a spirit as universal as God, reëmerging in

all whom we have admired and followed, and been loved by—the one saving power that redeems us from our selfishness.

A man can take no better road to reality than this which leads through the struggle with selfishness, in himself and in the world. The biggest battle we have on hand to-day is the fight with selfishness. We should nail that thesis on the door of every college chapel in the land. In an academic atmosphere we are tempted to give more thought to other problems, but the fight with selfishness remains the battle over all. We often miss this point by arguing that self-interest is a permanent and good instinct in our nature, and so it is. But the true outlet for self-interest is in service, not in selfishness. The "ancient foe" would long since have blocked all progress and wrecked the world but for a devoted few who, in opposition, have given up their lives to God's spirit of concern for the good of all. They have released the undefeated power that has moved the world toward truth and righteousness. By their sacrifice our great chance at life has come. For shame if college-trained men take this blood-bought chance only to join the sordid company who seize what they can for themselves. God grant, rather, that where the fight is thickest

with the selfish customs of the world, there may be found a group of men with your inheritance still standing out with their backs against the wall.

Prayer

O God, who hast created man in Thine own image to be a partaker of the life of others, we would turn our last thought to Thee, within whose inclusive purpose our whole life standeth. Remind us yet again, lest we forget, that each separate life must find its meaning in a plan larger than its own. Give power to those who teach in this place, that they may form here a home of true creativeness, where adventurous spirits may learn to stand between the needs of men and the unguessed resources of Thy world. Grant that knowledge gathered here may be devoted to the service and not to the domination of men. Unite, we pray Thee, all who shall labour here through the years in a fellowship that breeds keenness of mind and zeal for truth, that incites wonder and keeps men loyal to that high adventure which ever seeks the larger, nobler way for our struggling race to live together, according to Thy will for the good of all, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST

EDWIN DU BOSE MOUZON

BISHOP OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH

Edwin Du Bose Mouzon, Bishop of the North Carolina, Western North Carolina, South Carolina, and Upper South Carolina Conferences, is the liberal leader of Southern Methodism and has won the general respect of students of the South. He was active in the founding of the Southern Methodist University at Dallas, Texas, and has ever been to the fore in the educational enterprises of the Church in which he is bishop. He has been frequently in demand as a college preacher throughout the South and has delivered a number of lectures under the direction of various foundations.

Bishop Mouzon was born in Spartanburg, South Carolina, in 1869. He received his A.B. degree from Wofford College in 1889, and entered the Texas Conference in the same year. Between the years of 1889 and 1901 he held pastorates in Bryan, Austin, Caldwell, Galveston, Flatonio, Abilene, and Fort Worth, Texas. He was later pastor of the Central Church, Kansas City, Missouri, from 1901 to 1904, and then of the Travis Park Church of San Antonio, Texas, until 1908. He served as Professor of Theology in Southwestern University, Georgetown, Texas, from 1908 to 1910, and was elected Bishop in 1910.

He received the degree of D.D. from Southwestern University in 1905, and LL.D. in 1911. He will deliver the Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching at Yale in 1929.

He is the author of *Does God Care?*, *Fundamentals of Methodism*, *The Program of Jesus*, and *The Missionary Evangel.*

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST

EDWIN DU BOSE MOUZON

Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.—Romans 8:9.

By way of exposition I read a passage from the Epistle to the Galatians: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22-25). This is to say that if any man has the *Spirit* of Christ, he will also have the *spirit* of Christ. If the Spirit of the living Christ dwells in him, he will have the mind that was in Christ.

The final test of any religion is the kind of man it produces. We must apply this test to all religions whatsoever. The final test of Buddhism is the best Buddhism can do in the production of good men and good women. The final test of Confucianism is to be found in the quality of

personal character produced by Confucianism. The final test of Mohammedanism is in the character of the men and women living in the lands where Islam is the prevailing religion. And just so, the supreme and final test of the Christian religion is a moral test. It needs to be understood that the ultimate test of Christianity is not an intellectual test, as important as a correct understanding of the great facts and truths of Christianity undoubtedly is. It needs also clearly to be understood that the final test of our religion is not an emotional test, although it would be a grave mistake to discount the value and significance of the emotions that stir us in the deepest places of our being. The acid test to apply to every Christian life is this: Does this professed Christian resemble Jesus Christ? Does he have the spirit of Christ?

Let it also be remarked that the final test of the value of any theology is to be found in the character of the men who accept that theology. For it does matter immensely what a man believes. It is extremely superficial to discount the importance of creedal statements. Three things are vitally related the one to the other—*creed*, *character*, and *conduct*. For just as the flower springs out of the stem, and just as the fruit

grows out of the flower, so does character spring out of creed and so does conduct grow out of character. Does a man's creed make him narrow and intolerant and bitter and exclusive? Then there must of necessity be something wrong with that man's creed. Does a man's creed make him broad and charitable and sweet tempered and catholic in his spirit? Then it is evident that, whatever superficial errors there may be in his thinking, his creed is at bottom correct.

It will be remembered that some months ago a certain pulpiteer killed a man in his church office on Saturday and on Sunday delivered a discourse from the text: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." One must not be accused of being uncharitable when one sees an evident connection between this man's deeds and his creed. Servetus was burned through the influence of John Calvin. Now Servetus was not a bad man but a good man. However, he held certain erroneous notions touching the Person of Christ. Theologically he was a heretic; therefore, John Calvin said, "Burn him." But that Christlike mystic, Castellio, came exactly to the point when he wrote to Calvin, "To burn a man is not to defend a doctrine: it is to burn a man." And at the pres-

ent time when so many dogmatists are insisting that a theology correct in all particulars is to be required of all who profess to follow Jesus, and when so many abusive epithets are being hurled at good men who hold contrary views, it would be well to remember that *to abuse a man is not to defend a doctrine: it is to abuse a man.*

We now raise the question: Where are we to go to find what the spirit of Jesus is? I answer at once, we are not to go to the Old Testament but to the New Testament. The Old Testament is partial and imperfect. As the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it, "God of old time spoke unto the fathers by divers portions and in divers manners." As men were able to bear it, as their moral character and spiritual discernment developed, God made His will known. "At the end of these days he hath spoken unto us in His Son." Always the Old Testament must be read in the light of the New Testament. The mistake of the Puritans, for instance, was that they brought their New Testament down to the level of the Old Testament. Oliver Cromwell was one of the mightiest men that ever trod the earth, and he was devoutly religious; but he was not a New Testament saint, he was an Old Testament hero. He belongs with Elijah and Samuel and David;

he is not to be placed side by side with Jesus and John and Paul. And we must go further than this. All the New Testament must be read in the light of the four Gospels. Everything in the Bible must be brought to the judgment bar of Jesus Christ. His voice is the one supreme voice that sounds down through the ages. His character is the one character in the light of which all men must be judged. We go, therefore, to the four gospels and ask: What is the spirit of Christ?

I

The spirit of Christ is the spirit of utmost loyalty to truth.

He himself was truth. What he seemed he was, and what he was he seemed. Jesus was real. I never call any man a hypocrite. I do not know what a man's inner life may be. But Jesus did use that cutting word. Said he, "Alas, for you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites." Now this word *hypocrite* is a very interesting word. It is a Greek word that has been brought over into the English language; and in the Greek usage it meant *an actor*, one who acts on the stage. The scribes and Pharisees, according to Jesus, were not genuine in their religious life; they were artificial. They were only playing at religion.

And it must be admitted that there is much of the theatrical in many of us who are professed Christians. We love the footlights and we keep our eyes on the galleries. We are concerned too much about what men think of us and not enough about what the Searcher of Hearts knows us to be. Jesus was real. Said he, "I *am* the way, the truth, and the life." Not merely, "I *teach* the truth, and *show* the way"; but "I *am* the way, the truth, and the life." And again he said, "I am King of the truth. To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice."

Now there are two age-old enemies of the truth: the one is literalism and the other, traditionalism.

In bondage to the letter of Scripture, the Jews had lost their spiritual liberty. They carefully studied the Scriptures. They counted the very words in their manuscripts. They zealously guarded the letter of the law; and in the very act of doing this, they lost their knowledge of the truth. Jesus said, "Ye search the Scriptures because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me; and ye will not come unto me, that ye may

have life." They supposed that eternal life was to be found in the written page of the sacred writings. Jesus declared that life is not to be had in the knowledge of the Bible except only as the Bible leads men to him. And this, indeed, is a truth that needs to be laid to heart to-day; for nowadays there are many earnest men who in their very defense of the Holy Scriptures have lost the spirit of Jesus. Literalism, I say, is the enemy of the truth.

The other foe of the truth is traditionalism. The traditionalist is bound hand and foot to the past. He erects the institution into greater importance than the human beings institutions were intended to serve. And, therefore, he becomes much more interested in preserving ancient institutions than he is in saving living men. To the traditionalists of his day Jesus declared, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." They had perverted the purpose of the Sabbath. They had taken the position that by all means and at any cost the institution of the Sabbath must be preserved. But Jesus insists that institutions are made for men, not men for institutions. And we should declare with all possible emphasis that no matter what the institution may be, our chief interest is never in

the institution as an end in itself, but in the institution only as it serves humanity. Otherwise, traditionalism will block the way to the coming in of the truth that sets free.

The spirit of Jesus is the spirit of utmost devotion to reality in being and to truth in thinking and living. No whole-hearted Christian can ever be afraid of the truth. Be afraid of a falsehood, be afraid of a half truth: but never be afraid of the truth no matter where found. All truth is of God. Truth never conflicts with truth. The half truths of ignorant and dogmatic theologians will conflict with the facts and truths of science; and the half truths of ignorant and dogmatic scientists will conflict with the everlasting truths of religion: but all truth, whether theological or scientific, comes from God and leads to God. I make my own, certain lines which I committed to memory when little more than a lad:

"Before thy mystic altar, Heavenly Truth,
I kneel in manhood as I knelt in youth.
Thus let me kneel till this dull form decay,
And life's last shade be lightened by thy ray.
Then shall this soul, now wrapped in clouds below,
Soar without bounds, without consuming glow."

II

The spirit of Christ is the spirit of passionate purity.

None was ever so pure as he; and his purity glowed with a burning passion. Very truly has it been said, "No heart is pure that is not passionate; no virtue is safe that is not enthusiastic."

Let me give you the most beautiful picture of perfect purity in all the literature of the world. It is found in the eighth chapter of the Gospel according to John. It is a story that was current in the early Church and which found a permanent place in the fourth Gospel. It bears all the marks of verisimilitude:

"And the scribes and Pharisees bring a woman taken in adultery; and having set her in the midst they say unto him, Teacher, this woman hath been taken in adultery, in the very act. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such: what sayest thou? But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground. But when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and with his finger wrote

on the ground. And they, when they heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

Study this picture a moment. Coarse, vulgar men, without feeling and without shame, drag the poor, miserable woman before the crowd and into the presence of Jesus. The law had been violated. They were anxious, therefore, to have her punished. But Jesus was so humiliated and embarrassed that he said nothing and did nothing except to stoop down and with his finger write on the ground. And when they continued clamouring for an answer from him, having vaguely discerned the fact that there was an essential difference between the spirit of Jesus and the spirit of rigid enforcement of law, Jesus lifted up himself and said unto them: "He that is without sin let him first cast a stone at her." And then in his embarrassment he stooped down again and wrote on the ground. Presently, when

he had lifted himself up and looked round about him, he saw that all the men had gone out, from the youngest to the eldest, and that he was left alone with the sinful woman. Then said he to her, "Woman, where are thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?" And when she said, "No man, Lord," Jesus answered, "Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more." I submit that a more perfect picture of purity is not to be found in all the literature of the world.

And I pause to add that from that day until now it has been the glory of our Christianity to sympathize with the fallen, to uplift the weak, and in Christ's name to say, "Go and henceforth sin no more."

In his teachings concerning moral purity Jesus fell heir to the teachings of the Old Testament, but he advanced far beyond them. He built upon the foundation of the prophets, but he breathed a new spirit into their writings. Jesus was not a *destroyer* but a *fulfiller*. Said he, "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy but to fulfil." And we will best understand the meaning of that word fulfil if we turn its component parts about and make it read "*fill full*." Jesus came not to destroy, but to fill full. He fulfils the Old Testament teaching,

as the day fulfils the dawn, as the fruit fulfils the flower. Take by way of illustration the Master's teaching concerning personal purity: "Ye have heard it was said by those of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery, but I say unto you that whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." The men of Jesus' day supposed that the sin was in the outward act. Jesus traces it back to its source and says that the heart itself must be clean. And immediately, with all possible emphasis, he goes on to enforce this truth. Purity must be won even though the highest price has to be paid for it—"If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee." Purity must be won even though the sacrifice of a right eye be required. "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee." Purity is worth the sacrifice, if necessary, even of the right hand. And he adds, "It is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." By all means and at any cost we must be saved from the hell of personal impurity.

Thus Jesus brought a new passion into the world, the passion for personal purity. The story

of the New Testament Church and the history of early Christianity cannot be understood unless this be kept in mind. Down from the history of those early centuries there has come no more appealing tale than the story of the martyrdom of Perpetua. She was a young woman of noble birth who had become a Christian, and because of her faith she had been arrested and condemned to martyrdom in the arena. She was to be bound to the horns of a wild ox, and after having been tossed before the multitude was to die at the hands of the gladiator. She made a strange request and, strange to say, that request was granted—that she might be permitted to wear her dress while suffering martyrdom. And when at last her limp body fell on the sands of the arena, more dead than alive, the assembled multitude saw her draw about her body the folds of her garment that had been torn as she was tossed. This instinctive evidence of perfect Christian purity made such an impression, even on heathen minds, that the story has been preserved and has come on down the centuries.

Now I submit that nothing is more needed in the moral life of the people of America to-day than a revival of this passion that burned in the

heart of Jesus, the passion for personal purity. We have fallen upon a time when the psychological doctrine of "self-expression" has about worked itself out to a *reductio ad absurdum.* Certainly no one can object to self-expression when there is a worth-while self to express. But self-expression has come to mean, in the thought of many, self-indulgence, and by self-indulgence is meant sensual self-indulgence. But strength of character and force of personality depend upon self-discipline and self-control; and purity alone opens the way to spiritual vision. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Which is to say, what a man sees depends upon what he is. Moral affinity is necessary to the knowledge of personality. If we are to know God we must be spiritually akin to him. "The problems of a man sinful are the axioms of a man holy."

III

The spirit of Christ is the spirit of self-sacrificing service.

Nothing reveals the spirit of Christ as does the cross. And by the cross is meant much more than that instrument of wood on which Jesus died. By the cross is meant much more than some theological doctrine concerning the nature of the

atonement. The cross is the principle of our holy religion. "All the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime."

The cross of Christ was set in the sharpest possible contrast with the spirit of Roman civilization. Two things were characteristic of Roman civilization in the days of Jesus and Paul —the one was *love of power*, and the other, *love of pleasure*. That was indeed a marvellous civilization and the influence of it is upon us down to this present hour. But it had in it the seeds of decay. For no civilization built on selfishness can stand. In the long run the laws of nature, which are the laws of God, are always on the side of self-discipline and self-control and self-sacrifice and service. "Who follows pleasure, pleasure slays." Thus it came about that during the New Testament period pagan civilization was bankrupt.

"In his cool hall with haggard eves
The Roman noble lay:
He drove abroad, in furious guise,
Along the Appian Way;
He made a feast, drank fierce and fast,
And crowned his hair with flowers—
No easier, nor no quicker, past
The impracticable hours."

Into that pagan world came Jesus with his cross; and then everything began to change. Heine dreamed that he was at a supper of the gods; heavenly wine was brought, and they all drank it and lived at ease. But suddenly in the midst of the feast the door flew open, and in came a wan figure staggering under the weight of a great cross, which he threw down upon the banquet table. Then the faces of the gods turned pale, and one by one they vanished away. Into that Roman civilization came Jesus with his cross. In the presence of it, false ideals faded and false gods vanished out of sight. This principle of the cross marks the essential difference between Christianity and all pagan ethics, ancient or recent.

To attempt to illustrate in any adequate way this principle as taught in the four Gospels would be to present the complete story of the life of Jesus from his birth in the manger down to his burial in a borrowed tomb. We take only one outstanding story. James and John came to him asking that chief places be given them in the coming kingdom, that they might sit one on his right hand and the other on his left in his glory. But Jesus said, "Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink? or to be baptized with the baptism

that I am baptized with?" And not knowing what they said, they replied, "We are able." But Jesus answered, "Chief places in my kingdom are not given away as favours. They are only for men qualified to receive them. And my kingdom is entirely unlike the kingdoms of this world where they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them." And hear especially these further words from him who in himself fulfilled the prophet's vision of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah: "Whosoever would become great among you, shall be your servant; and whosoever would be first among you, shall be your bondservant. For verily the Son of Man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

This is the very heart of the gospel: not to be served but to serve; not to get but to give. And the largest spiritual development lies this way. A profounder truth was never uttered than the truth contained in Jesus' great declaration: "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it." That is to say, whosoever lives for himself will have a very small self to live for; but whosoever loses sight of self in the serv-

ice of God and humanity will come to the largest and richest development of his own personality.

IV

The spirit of Christ is the spirit of the broadest human sympathy.

Lying at the centre of the teachings of Jesus is his doctrine concerning the value of the human soul. With him the soul is of greater value than all material things. "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The only thing of intrinsic value is human personality. Everything else is of value only as it relates to the soul.

And see how Jesus teaches respect for man as man. In the Sermon on the Mount he traces the sin of murder back to its secret springs in the heart. Not only is it wrong to kill; it is wrong also to have those feelings that lead to murder. And so the Master says, "Whosoever is angry with his brother is in danger of the judgment." For anger leads to murder. Again, "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council." "Raca" was just a word of contempt. And whosoever has in his heart feelings of contempt sins against his brother. Again the

Master said, "Whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." All of which is to say in the most forcible manner that we must have charity toward all men and contempt for none. Contempt is wickedness. It violates fundamentally the truth of the divine fatherhood and the principle of human brotherhood.

As illustrative of the largeness of the charity of Jesus toward all human beings, take the attitude of the Master toward the Samaritans. The Jews had no dealing with the Samaritans. They hated them. And for two perfectly good reasons. First, because the Samaritans had no family tree. And secondly, because the Samaritans were heretics. When the people of the Northern Kingdom had been carried away into captivity and only the poorest had been left in the land, their conquerors brought in people from the surrounding nations to repopulate the deserted country. The Israelites left behind intermarried with these foreigners and it was not possible for these Samaritans to claim unmixed descent from Father Abraham. Now a family tree is something to be proud of, and we are able to appreciate the motive which led the Hebrews to take genuine pride in their genealogical tables. Furthermore,

these Samaritans were heretics. They accepted none of the Old Testament but the writings of Moses. And there had formerly stood on Mount Gerizim a rival temple. No wonder the Jews hated the Samaritans. But Jesus took no such attitude. In going from Judea into Galilee he went straight through Samaria and talked with the sinful Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. When ten lepers had been cleansed by Jesus and he had sent them on their way, there was one of them who came back and kneeled down to give thanks—and he was a Samaritan. But the most illuminating illustration of the attitude of Jesus toward the Samaritans is to be seen in the Parable of the Good Samaritan. The story, in substance, is as follows:

A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and he fell among robbers which both stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him as dead. And a certain priest was going that way and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. For the priest was preoccupied; he was concerned about his duties in connection with temple worship in Jerusalem. He had important work to do there. He did not have time to look after the needs of a suffering fellow man. And in like manner a Levite came that way and

looked at the sufferer and passed by on the other side. He, too, had duties connected with the holy temple. Both priest and Levite were the victims of a system; they were slaves to institutionalism. But, said Jesus, a certain Samaritan as he journeyed came where the wounded man was and looked upon him and was moved with compassion and came up to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine. And he took him up and set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn and personally took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed he left money with the host and said, Take care of him and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay thee.

One may be sure that when Jesus told this story it burned like fire and cut like a knife. But my point now is that the story itself is a revealing illustration of the broad, human sympathy of the Master himself.

Take another illustration of the wideness of Jesus' sympathy. I refer to Jesus' *Judgment-Parable of the Gentiles*. It is in the Twenty-fifth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew: "But when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he

sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." The phrase "all the *nations*" should be translated, "all the *gentiles*." When we have this translation in mind, the entire parable becomes illuminating. To those on his right hand, the King shall say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Then shall the righteous among the gentiles answer him, saying, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or athirst and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick or in prison and came unto thee?" They were unaware of the fact that Christ had ever been near them. They had not seen him nor heard of him; and, therefore, they expressed surprise at these words of commendation. And the King shall say unto

them on his left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire. For I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger and ye took me not in; naked and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison and ye visited me not." Then shall the unrighteous answer him, saying, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" They had never seen Jesus, nor heard of him. They, therefore, denied the accusation. They had, indeed, failed to minister to the hungry and thirsty; they had failed to show kindness to strangers and to the destitute and the sick; they had done nothing for those shut up in prison. They had not realized their obligation to their human brothers, and were lacking in sympathy and consideration for those who were in distress. And this was their condemnation. Men of all nations shall stand or fall according to the attitude they have taken toward their fellow men and in accordance with the manner in which they have displayed the spirit of Jesus. Which is to say that the ultimate and universal test of human character is to be found in this: whether or not men display the spirit of Jesus Christ.

No one has put this more beautifully than has Leigh Hunt in his "Abou Ben Adhem":

"Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
An angel, writing in a book of gold;
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the Presence in the room he said:
'What writest thou?' The vision raised its head,
And with a look made all of sweet accord,
Answered, 'The names of those who love the Lord.'
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said, 'I pray thee, then,
Write me as one who loves his fellow men.'
The angel wrote and vanished; the next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed their names whom love of God hath blest,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest."

We come back to the statement made in the opening paragraphs of this sermon. The final test of all religion is to be found in the kind of men it produces. Said the Master, "Not everyone

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that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven." The final test is the moral test. Not everyone who professes belief in an orthodox creed, not everyone that professes an emotional experience; but only those whose lives are in harmony with the will of the Father shall be counted citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

It is told of Saint Francis of Assisi that once when he was worshipping in the chapel of Saint Damien before the image of Christ on the cross, he found that he could not take his eyes from Christ and that Christ's eyes were turned on him so that he could not get away from them. The Crucified followed him every way he turned. Henceforth Christ and his cross had conquered Saint Francis. And may I be permitted to say that since the vision, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of Galilee and of the world, has risen upon me, I cannot get away from him? His look follows me and my eyes turn irresistibly to him. My life-long desire has been to see Jesus and to show him to others. In his light I see light. In the light of Jesus I see all the world. The spirit of Jesus, if we are to be Christian, must per-

meate and transfigure every aspect of our living and thinking. His fearless and confident attitude toward all truth must be ours. Something of the white purity of his passionate soul must burn in our hearts. The spirit of the cross, which was incarnate in his life and forever glorified in his death, must be the all-controlling spirit of our daily lives. His broad sympathy toward all mankind, his recognition of the supreme value of human personality, his love for all who wander and suffer and die, must characterize our lives. Only so shall we be able to say with the apostle, "I bear branded on my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

One other thing remains to be said, and it must never be forgotten. The inner spirit of a man is never reproduced by outward imitation. It comes only through personal contact with a living personality. The spirit of Christ can come only as a birth from above. It is not of self; it comes only from God. The spirit of Christ shall be ours only when we are able to say, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but *Christ* liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me."

Prayer

Our Heavenly Father: We rejoice that into this world of ours with its imperfection and failures there came One who is seen to be better than our best thoughts and highest aspirations. In his light we see how far we fall short of being what we ought to be. For somehow he speaks to the deepest depths of our being and awakens great longings to be like him. Breathe into us, we beseech Thee, Thy Holy Spirit, that we too may have the spirit of truth, the spirit of passionate purity, the spirit of sacrificial service, and the spirit of a broad and compassionate humanity. And this we ask in Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen.

RELIGIOUS QUITTERS

CHARLES REYNOLDS BROWN

DEAN EMERITUS OF THE YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL

Charles Reynolds Brown is a veteran as a college preacher. It is one thing to preach an acceptable sermon a year in a dozen or fifteen college chapels in the East, Middle West, and West. He has done that for many years. It is another thing to preach six or eight times a year in the same university chapel for seventeen years as Dean Brown has done at Yale, where, in addition to being dean of the Divinity School, he was pastor of the University Church from 1914 to 1927. His capacity for simple, terse, and straightforward talk upon practical issues, expressed with intense conviction and often with flashes of humour, his ability to make people know that he has kept his feet upon the earth and understands men and affairs, have made him appeal increasingly to college men no less than to the general public. Year after year he has been voted the most popular preacher at Yale.

He was born on a farm in Bethany, West Virginia, in 1862. His parents moved to Iowa while he was still very young and he grew up on a farm in that state, sharing in its life and work. He graduated from the University of Iowa in 1883; received the degree of M.A. from Iowa in 1886; S.T.B. from Boston University in 1899, and S.T.D. in 1922; M.A. from Yale in 1911. Oberlin, Brown, and Yale have conferred upon him the degree of D.D.

He was pastor of the First Congregational Church of Oakland, California, from 1896 to 1911, and then became dean of the Yale Divinity School. He reached the age of retirement in 1928, and is now serving as preacher and writer to the country at large.

He gave the Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching at Yale in 1906, and again in 1923. His books include the following: *The Main Points*, *The Strange Ways of God*, *Faith and Health*, *The Modern Man's Religion*, *The Latent Energies in Life*, *The Religion of a Layman*, *The Art of Preaching*, *What Is Your Name?*, *Where Do You Live?*, *These Twelve*, and *The Making of a Minister*.

RELIGIOUS QUITTERS

CHARLES REYNOLDS BROWN

The gospel is not all velvet—there are places where it feels more like sandpaper. The Master did not go about handing out soft words indiscriminately, no matter how men were faced. He would sometimes thrust in the sharp sword of rebuke until it hurt. He did say "Come unto me and I will give you rest," but He said it only to those who had become "weary and heavy laden" to some purpose. He stood more often uttering a clarion call to awaken men from their spiritual sloth.

Here in the lesson were three men who were "religiously inclined," as we say in our soft phrase. They had "great respect for religion." They always spoke well of the church and the clergy. They regarded themselves as men of excellent sentiments and they liked to make impressive moral gestures. If anyone had spoken slightingly of religious faith in their presence they would have been grieved.

One of them said, "Lord, I will follow thee." But the Master noticed a certain droop in the man's voice and He replied, "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." Following Him might mean sleeping out occasionally. He was calling men to a life of hardship and self-sacrifice. They might have to lunch occasionally on locusts and wild honey. That was too much for his friendly soul. He did not care to go any farther—he turned back and that was the last of him. He quit.

The second man heard the summons, "Follow me." It awakened a response in his heart and he started up with his face toward the light. But he made certain conditions. "Let me first bury my father."

There is nothing to indicate that his father was dead at that time. He wanted to wait until his father died and the property was divided up and the estate all settled. Then, he said, he might be willing to give some thought to the claims of Christian discipleship. He might be ready to do his bit of Christian service. When the Master declined that postponed allegiance, he, too, turned away and that was the last of him. He quit.

The third man heard the call and accepted it.

"Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." His words seemed to have the right ring. But before he let his voice fall, he added, "First, however, let me go and bid farewell to those who are at my house." Let me go around and visit all my relatives and tell them that I am about to become a Christian!

His request seemed innocent enough on the face of it, but those "farewells" of actresses and singers are often unduly prolonged. They are sometimes repeated indefinitely until the public grows tired of them. Where a young man has been spending the evening with an attractive young woman, the simple process of saying "good-night" takes a great deal more time than one would suppose unless he had been there himself, and had participated in that delightful exercise. The Master detected the false note of an uncertain purpose in this man's reply and He dismissed him with a sharp word. "No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit."

They were all quitters. They had good impulses; they meant well; they had a kindly feeling toward Christ. If anyone had uttered a harsh word about Him, they would have resented it. They felt that it would be a good thing if the

whole world could have a larger measure of His spirit.

But when the time came to stand up and be counted, they were not there. They were not willing to go the whole way of Christian discipleship. They were on the fence, without sufficient sand in their crops to get down on the side where they belonged and take hold with their fellow Christians. Jesus described them as "men who having put their hands to the plough, looked back" and then went back. In that way they ceased to have any value for the kingdom of God. He dismissed them all as "quitters."

Some twenty years ago a little book appeared on *Real Religion* and it was inscribed "Not for Beginners, but for Beginners Again." It was addressed to those who had once been Christians but for some reason had turned back. It undertook to pick up those who had fallen down through mental confusion or moral discouragement and set them on their feet again faced toward the light.

You may remember that in *Pilgrim's Progress* two men fell into the slough of despond. They both wallowed around for a time, soiled, bedraggled, depressed. The sad fact was that one of them finally climbed out on the side where he

fell in and gave it up. The other man had the good sense to climb out on the side toward the Celestial City, and to go on. How much depends upon the way a man emerges from some swamp of doubt, discouragement, or indifference!

Let me ask two questions: Who are the quitters in these days? What can be done to line them up again?

Who are the quitters? Some of them are young people, college students perhaps, who were brought up in Christian homes. They have a splendid Christian inheritance and background. The showing they make in decent living to-day is due mainly to the moral legacies they received from their parents rather than to any spiritual capital which they have amassed by their own efforts. When they were children they were taught to pray, to read the Bible, to go to church. They were expected to line up on the Christian side of it in their habits and aspirations. Many of them joined the Church, made open declaration of their loyalty to Christ, and received of the sacrament of remembrance. They were named with the name of Christ.

Then as the years came and went they were given a larger measure of liberty and there came

a change. They became careless and listless in their religious habits. They no longer swam up stream—they were spiritual driftwood, carried here and there by whatever current of influence happened to flow. They may not be doing anything wicked—their social traditions would hold them back from the coarser sins of the flesh. But they have ceased to count for the kingdom of God. The religion of Christ is no stronger in the circles where they move because they are there.

In their better moments, when they take stock, reckoning up the debits and credits, they feel that no other life can be compared for one moment to a genuinely Christian life. They would withhold their highest admiration from any life which was not thoroughly Christian. Yet there they are on the sidelines rather than in the game —they are quitters.

Some of these quitters are mature people. Once they were active, useful, devoted Christians. Their serene, radiant joy in living in fellowship with Him and in the unselfish service of their fellows was such that they raised the spiritual temperature of any room or of any group they entered. There was a certain healthy con-

tagion about them which brought others out of darkness into light, out of spiritual deadness into newness of life.

You can think of any number of such people now as you sit here—this one, that one, and the other one! Men and women like Bishop Brent, Wilfred Grenfell, and Maude Royden! Thank God there are thousands of them! The strength and beauty of their Christian faith carries with it an atmosphere which is not of this common earth. Branches of the true vine, bearing the fine fruits of the spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, and all the rest, just as grapes grow ripe on a southern exposure!

But here also there came a change. The cares of this world and the fact that they had more money to spend, their indulgence in a wider range of amusement and their absorptions in second, third, and fourth rate interests, crowded out those values which stand first. All this brought about a lowering of spiritual tone. The song in the heart went unsung, the prayer was left unsaid, there was no more "grace before meat," their places in the house of worship were frequently vacant and then vacant altogether. That full, fine measure of consecration and of capacity for self-sacrifice was gone.

They are not wicked people—God forbid—oftentimes they are very respectable, likeable people. But they are religious quitters. They are not in a position to hand on to their children any such rich heritage of Christian interest and devotion as that which they received from their earnest, godly parents. When you reckon up the forces which really count for the coming of the kingdom, the sway and rule of the spirit which was in Christ, it is hardly worth while to enter their names. They have quit.

Some people quit because they are too lazy to make the necessary mental readjustments in their beliefs in the light of advancing knowledge. They are like boys who would refuse to grow up and become men because of the bother involved in learning to shave. "When I was a child, I thought as a child." We all did. It is the only way a child can think. We thought of God as a tall elderly gentleman with long white hair and beard standing yonder in the clouds something like the Statue of Liberty in New York harbour. We thought of prayer as a kind of magical performance whereby if a man was sufficiently in earnest and was sure enough of himself he could manipulate all the forces of earth and sky just

because he was on his knees. We thought of the Bible from Judges to John, from Leviticus to Luke, as an infallible product written by the fingers of the Almighty Himself. We thought of redemption in a mechanical way as a kind of celestial bookkeeping, the sufferings of Christ on one side of the ledger as a credit and our own sinfulness on the other side as a debit—and so the account was balanced and we were set free. Our conception of religion was altogether immature.

"When I became a man, I put away childish things." Every man does who grows and thinks. But some people do it by tossing their entire religious interest out of the window without taking the trouble to replace those childish conceptions with a more mature, reasonable, workable faith. They quit merely because they thought that it would be too much trouble to grow. They gave up because of the apparent difficulty involved in thinking their way through into the open.

The putting away of childish things cannot be done all at once or overnight. It is a long, patient process of readjustment and growth. Some of the quitters seem to think that the rest of us still believe those childish notions. Some of them

write articles about religion for the newspapers and magazines. When we read what they write we find that all they know about religion was learned apparently long ago in some rural Sunday-school when they were ten-year-olds. Poor things, before they undertake to discuss the subject of religion they had better grow up and learn to shave. "Be no more children, tossed to and fro" by every shallow notion which comes along, "but, speaking the truth in love, grow up into Him in all things, who is the head, even Christ."

Some people have quit for still other reasons. They found as they grew older that Christian life involved so much more moral discipline, self-sacrifice, and steadiness of purpose than they had supposed at the age of ten, that they did not feel quite equal to it. "To be good is noble," Mark Twain used to say, "but to tell others how to be good and then leave it to them is very much less trouble." These people looked at the way that goeth upward into Christian character and destiny but they felt tired; and so they sat down and gave it up.

The law of cost operates in the kingdom of

God as it does everywhere. No pains, no gains! Christian character costs time and thought, strength and money, devotion and effort—it cannot be had on any easier terms. The leading symbol of the Christian religion is not a feather bed or a morris chair—it is a cross. Thomas Huxley was not a theologian but Saul was among the prophets when Huxley said once to an audience in London, "It may not take much of a man to be a Christian but it does take all there is of him." You will hear people putting up every kind of bluff which the mind of man can devise to explain why they are not Christians, when the plain truth of the matter is that they are not willing to pay the price. Here they are, a multitude which no man can number, quitters on all these various pretexts!

What can we do to line them up again? What did Jesus do? When men showed themselves reluctant about following Him, He never lowered His standards. He did not abate one jot nor one tittle of His demand for straight thinking, honest purpose, unselfish action. He met everyone with a clear-cut summons. "If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his

cross"—not *my* cross but *his* cross—"and follow me." He never even tried to make Christian life seem easy—He knew that it was difficult.

There came to Him one day a rich young ruler. He would have been a very desirable pewholder. He was well to do, had a good social position, and had been a clean-living chap. He had never broken any of the Ten Commandments—"all these have I kept from my youth up." How many of us can say that?

But he was unsatisfied. "What lack I yet?" Jesus looked him over and loved him and then laid His finger on the weak spot in the young man's make-up. He recognized the fact that his weakness lay in an excessive fondness for luxury, ease, self-indulgence, and other perquisites of great wealth. He knew that these do not travel in the same car with Christian discipleship. He therefore said to the young man, "Sell and give and follow me."

That was too much for him. Sell and spend! Sell and hoard! Sell and invest—all these he understood and practised. But "sell and give"! He did not like the looks of it and he turned away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. And Jesus let him go. He gave every man the challenge of a hard task to call out his moral reserves.

There is nothing attractive about the quitters. To be perfectly frank, they are merely moral cowards who have thrown off their share of responsibility upon those who show themselves more robust. We all recognize that the greatest need of the world is for a larger supply of sound, reliable character. The careless, the flippant, the cynical are of no more value for social progress than the chaff which the wind driveth away. When two men are carrying a log and one of them suddenly steps out, throwing his share of the burden entirely upon the other man, you know what you think of him.

You might suppose that the shame of their action would sting some of these quitters into a worthier attitude toward life. There came one day from a hard-fought field a company of soldiers, weary and dirty, broken and blood-stained. They saw standing at one side, well toward the rear, a group of deserters, all clean and comfortable. The soldiers called out to them, "Go hang yourselves! We fought the battle through and won it, and you were not there."

We do not win men to Christian life by toning it down. Nothing is gained by mincing matters. You cannot make Christian life easy for the simple reason that Jesus made it difficult. The glad

hand and the bright smile which "never comes off" may have a certain value at the Rotary Club but they soon reach their limit. They do not open the eyes of the blind nor cause the lame to walk nor make the crooked straight. It takes the One who made the cross the symbol of His method to do that. His demands are thoroughgoing. "Seek first the kingdom of God." Put the rule of the divine spirit first! Take Jesus seriously!

"No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit." It is plough work to which we are called, not a picnic. The furrows are to be laid open, not always in black loam, or in grassy lawns, but in fields where there are stumps, roots, stones, where the soil itself may seem as unyielding as a concrete sidewalk. Rough, hard, strenuous toil! When any man undertakes to follow Him, putting down evil under his feet, facing his duties without flinching, striving to furnish his full share of action in making our social order Christian, he will find that he has "put his hand to the plough."

But the sheer joy of striving to do it with any honest measure of sincerity surpasses any other form of satisfaction known to men. General Sherman used to say that when he was at the front, on the firing line, leading and directing

his troops, he was always full of hope. He felt sure that the victory would be won. When he was at the rear, where the wounded were being brought back, where the stragglers and deserters were in evidence, he was filled with fear and depression.

If you really want to overcome your doubt and discouragement, if you want to "greet the unseen with a cheer," always with a cheer, get into the fight against the evil of the world. Stand in the forefront of this resolute effort to make the spirit and method of Jesus everywhere triumphant. Then He will bring you off more than conquerors.

Prayer

Thou who dost stand at every door and knock, we open our hearts unto Thee without reserve. Enter Thou in afresh and possess us by Thy truth and grace. Cast out all that is unlike Thee. Break to us the bread of life that we may be strong and steadfast to walk in Thy ways. Grant us the high privilege of drinking from Thy cup and of being baptized with Thy spirit. So shall we become partakers of the divine nature and the willing instruments of Thy holy purpose, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DOES RIGHTEOUSNESS PAY?

HUGH BLACK

PROFESSOR IN UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

For twenty years Hugh Black has been preacher to the American colleges. It has been a difficult portfolio to hold and he has won honour and success amid the changing points of view of many student generations. From old Scotland he brings a rich family heritage, discernment in theology, humour, and prophetic fire.

He was born in Scotland in 1868. He attended the Rothesay Academy in Glasgow, and later Glasgow University. He prepared for the Presbyterian ministry at the Free Church College in Glasgow, graduating in 1891. He then became minister of the Sherwood Church, Paisley, and was later associated with Dr. Alexander Whyte in the ministry of St. George's United Free Church, Edinburgh, where he remained until 1906. He came to the United States to become Professor of Practical Theology in Union Seminary, which post he has occupied ever since.

He has received the honorary degree of D.D. from Yale, Princeton, and Glasgow, and the degree of D.Litt. from the University of Pittsburgh. He is author of *The Dream of Youth*, *Friendship*, *Culture and Restraint*, *Work*, *The Practice of Self-Culture*, *Listening to God* (Edinburgh Sermons), *Christ's Service of Love*, *The Gift of Influence* (University Sermons), *Comfort*, *Happiness*, *Three Dreams*, *According to My Gospel*, *The Open Door*, *The New World* and *Lest We Forget*.

DOES RIGHTEOUSNESS PAY?

HUGH BLACK

For the sceptre of wickedness shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.—Psalm 125:3.

THE scene of the Psalm seems to be the exile, when it has dragged its weary length out for many years. It is at least some such situation as that, in which the sceptre of wickedness is resting on the lot of Israel. There is a temptation to apostasy, a temptation even to the faithful to lose heart. At the very beginning of the trial some of the lower-souled among them would make the best of their surroundings and think nothing of Israel and all that Israel stood for. There has been such long delay, such dreary, hopeless waiting, and the sceptre of wickedness has lain so heavy, that now the fear strikes the Psalmist lest even some of the true and faithful will ultimately give way.

The Psalmist has laid hold of the truth that no true man is tried above what he can bear. He

declares that the exile will not last so long but that the righteous can hold out to the very end. Nay, lest the righteous should give way and put forth their hands also to iniquity, the heavy rod shall be lifted from their lot. So it is a song of hope. The time is at hand: let the righteous be righteous still. They must not give way to evil now. It is a song of hope because it is a song of faith. Much may be moved, but Mount Zion abideth forever and they that trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion. To trust God is to root faith in the world's stable centre. It is to be as a mountain, even the holy hill which cannot be moved.

There is something pathetic in the Psalmist's fear, lest the trial should last too long and good men be tempted to despair of goodness. It is all the more pathetic because the Old Testament saints did believe that Jehovah's favour meant temporal prosperity. It was the lot of the righteous to sway the sceptre. Failure was explained as punishment, and if evil seemed to succeed there arose the very natural temptation to put forth the hand to iniquity. We find another psalmist stating it as an argument why God should deliver him from his present distress, because if he is not delivered it will discourage others. If Israel, God's servant, is left to be a

taunt to the scoffer, it will shame and confound all true believers. If relief never comes to the good man, if he is heaped forever with unmerited reproach, if there is no evidence that God is even interested in his fate, then, argues the Psalmist with holy boldness, the good will be discouraged and may even lose their faith. That is the argument why God should show men in clear fashion that the world is governed in a moral way, that He loves good and hates evil, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

It is a legitimate argument, and at least we understand this prayer that God should justify faith in Him, that He should own His own, and testify by patent palpable fact that the righteous were right in trusting Him. The Psalmist prays that the rod might now be lifted not merely for the righteous' sake, but for the sake of righteousness, almost as it were for God's sake. The Psalmist's argument with God to show favour to the good and enmity to evil is lest good men may be discouraged.

It may be too surface a view of the way in which the world is governed, and by itself would certainly be an unspiritual conception of life; for if goodness is to be judged by outward prosperity it would often be as a flower which grows

in a night and which the first breeze of adversity would wither. It would not be the highest motive to be good if we could only say about it that it brings prosperity. Still, so far as it goes the argument is cogent enough that men should see that it does not *pay* to be evil. It is an instinct of our heart to believe this. If the world is governed in a moral way, then essentially the Old Testament saints were right in looking for happy results to the good man.

After all, our whole human society is regulated by ourselves on this basis. We make it one function of punishment to deter from breaking the law. There may be an element of retribution in our legal punishment, to assert the offended majesty of the law, but as a social function I am not sure but that the chief idea in our punishments is preventive. We remember the judge's dictum when he passed the sentence of capital punishment on a horse stealer: "You are to be hanged, not for stealing horses but that horses may not be stolen." It is arguable, of course, that extreme punishments do not serve their purpose, but that is only a matter of degree and does not touch the real issue. It is perhaps arguable also that we are wrong in basing our punishments on such grounds, and that we should think more of

a possible redemptive purpose in punishment rather than a preventive. But, as a matter of fact, one function of punishment from the point of view of society is undoubtedly to deter others, "lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity." Society seeks to protect itself and to keep its members from undue temptation.

Ideally, Ruskin may be right in holding that justice is not meant to be either corrective or preventive, but vindictive. If we looked upon it as entirely preventive, then it would be merely a matter of expediency and not of principle. It would be to hang a man as a scarecrow and not as a malefactor. If punishment were looked upon merely as a device to protect society, to frighten other people from committing the same faults, it would be a purely selfish scheme which would deserve failure. And, as a matter of fact, being largely looked on in that light it does fail. For we often find that habitual criminals look on it as a fair game, a fight between themselves and society as to who shall get the better of it. Surely our punitive system should consider the reformation of the offender before even the protection of society and the vindication of outraged law.

The failure of our laws here only suggests that we need deeper sanctions for morality than ex-

ternal ones, such as that "honesty is the best policy." Even if facts did prove that it does not pay to do evil, it would not be a sufficient ground for true morality. It would be a kind of prudence. A man cannot be called a good man in any real sense unless his life is regulated by principles within. A man is not really righteous until he would not put forth his hand to iniquity whatever the consequences. Even although the moral world seemed topsy-turvy, he has that within him which refuses to let him be moved. Hope of reward and fear of punishment are motives on a low plane. They are probably necessary in the education of the race and of the individual, but they are at best only rudimentary morality. They are like leading strings to teach a child to walk, or like stakes to support a young tree, taken away when the tree becomes self-sufficient. The child has not learned to walk till he can do without the leading strings. The tree may be helped by the stakes at first, but they are not part of its life, and it would be a sickly plant if it could not do without them. Our laws may have to appeal to some extent to the motive of prudence, but a man cannot be called good if he merely refrains from evil from fear of the policeman. Before what he does, or abstains from doing,

can be called moral, it must correspond to an inward judgment of right. It must be more than blind obedience to a rule, and more than a decision on the ground of what is likely to pay best. If we ruled our conduct only so as to keep out of prison, it would be a misuse of language to call it goodness. The true root of duty is inward conformity to conscience, conformity to a standard set up in a man's own soul.

Now, all history and all experience seem designed to drive us to this deeper source. Israel, for instance, learned through exile and tribulation that goodness is not to be judged by external prosperity. Religion itself was spiritualized by the hard process, until faith came as pure gold twice refined out of the furnace. The Psalmist felt that the tragedy would be, not that the wicked should triumph over the righteous, but that the righteous should *become* as the wicked. Israel was taught not to trust to her first surface view of providence.

This spiritualizing of faith went on until in Christ, the very Cross itself, the sign of the most ignoble failure, was made the sign of the highest triumph. With that object-lesson before us we can never again base morality on mere prudence. In the light of the Cross an apostle could see that

men might suffer according to the will of God, and could call upon all such to commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing.[1] In the light of the Cross also we see how chastening itself may be the fruit of the deepest love. God's purpose in sanctification is seen to be so high and so great that it justifies any means. "Those He means to make the most resplendent He hath oftenest His tools upon."

History and experience teach us, then, to distinguish between the inward and the outward in this whole matter. Indeed, the scheme of life seems designed to lead us from the outward to the inward. For it is not self-evident that honesty is always the best policy in the outward sense. Wrong has often been on the throne and right on the scaffold. With Browning, we may hold from experience that it is wiser being good than bad and safer being meek than fierce; but that can only be when we put a deeper meaning into what is wise and what is safe. Certainly there is no security for true morals till we would choose to be good and meek, quite apart from the fact that they were the wiser and safer course from a worldly point of view. Our Lord did pronounce blessing even upon those persecuted for right-

[1] I Peter 4: 9.

eousness' sake, but it was not because it paid as a policy, or rather it was because it did pay essentially and eternally. The pure in heart are blessed; for they see God. It is not a matter of rewards and punishments in the ordinary sense, though nothing can alter the fact that there *are* rewards and punishments, and the chief of these are not things added from the outside, but in themselves.

The reward of being good is goodness. The reward of virtue is itself. A good man shall be satisfied from himself. The punishment of sinning is sin. The final good or evil consists not in having, but in being. The deepest punishment of hatred is to have the hating heart that fills the mind with hateful thoughts. Evil brings its own stain and sting. The moral world in which we live is designed this way. Our life is run on these lines, so that we, after these Christian years, accept the Psalmist's principle with only a deeper undercurrent of meaning. "Do good," he prayed, "unto those that be good"—and we believe it. *Good to the good*, for which he prayed, is indeed a principle rooted in our hearts. The sceptre of wickedness shall not rest, cannot rest, upon the lot of the righteous. When the righteous see it to be so, are sure that it must be so, can

they be tempted to put forth their hands unto iniquity?

"Good to the good" we feel to be reasonable and necessary. It ought to be so, say our instincts. It ought to be so, say our minds looking calmly on the facts. It will be so, say our best desires. It will be so, say our hearts, moved with doubt and troubled with many present appearances. It is so already, says faith. It ought to be so—it will be so—it is so, says faith, seeing deeply into the heart of things. The world is built that way. "That the righteous should be as the wicked that be far from Thee, O God." Faith will never believe it. It knows that to trust in the Lord is to be as the immovable hill, and is to be surrounded by His grace and love as the mountains are round about Jerusalem. Faith brings God in the heart and God in the life, safe within from evil of self, safe without from the evil of the world. It is to be established within and intrenched without, as the holy mount which cannot be moved.

Is this poetry and not fact? Poetry like this *is* fact.

Prayer

O God, we come once again to renew our allegiance to Thy Cause and Kingdom. We come humbly, for we know how we have faltered and fallen by the way. We commit ourselves once more to the ancient loyalties. We give ourselves again to the Christian obedience and the Christian service, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PROPHETIC LEADERSHIP

FRANCIS JOHN McCONNELL

RESIDENT BISHOP OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
PRESIDENT, FEDERAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST
IN AMERICA

STUDENTS of to-day are attracted to Bishop Francis John McConnell because of his keenness as a philosopher, his passion for social righteousness, and his fearlessness. By many he is regarded as Methodism's foremost leader, and when in 1928 he became the Resident Bishop of the District of New York, it was felt that a great religious leader had come to the Atlantic seaboard. Shortly after he was appointed to New York, Bishop McConnell was elected President of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. His manner of writing and speaking is rugged and vigorous, at times idiosyncratic and invariably attractive to youth. He has the happy power of challenging attention by his very style of address and of holding it by the originality of his thinking.

Bishop McConnell was born in Trinway, Ohio, in 1871. He graduated from Ohio Wesleyan in 1894, and took his professional training at Boston University, receiving there the degrees of S.T.B. and Ph.D. Upon entering the Methodist ministry he held pastorates in West Chelmsford, Newton Upper Falls, and Ipswich, Massachusetts, and from 1902 to 1903 was minister of the Harvard Street Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts. He then went to the New York Avenue Church of Brooklyn, remaining until 1909, when he was elected and became president of DePauw University. In 1912 he was elected Bishop of the Pittsburgh Conference District, where he remained until his transfer to New York. He has received the degree of D.D. from Ohio Wesleyan, and of LL.D. from Hanover College and Wesleyan University. He is author of the following books: *The Diviner Immanence, Religious Certainty, Christian Focus, The Increase of Faith, Personal Christianity, Understanding the Scriptures, Democratic Christianity, Public Opinion and Theology, The Preacher and the People, Is God Limited?, The Christlike God, Living Together,* and *Christian Citizenship.*

PROPHETIC LEADERSHIP

FRANCIS JOHN McCONNELL

God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.
—Hebrews 1:1.

THERE are two rather well-marked types of leadership in the warfare for the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. There is first the man who excels in what may be called a worthy form of popular leadership. This man gathers up what is stirring in the highest ranges of the popular thinking of a time and gives it clear and convincing statement. Gladstone once defined an orator as a speaker who stands over against his audience as a mountain stands over against the sea, condensing what comes up from the audience in mist or cloud into refreshing streams of speech which flow back into the mind of the audience with multiplied power. We may thus think of the popular religious leader as the one who somehow senses the unformed or half-formed conceptions moving in the higher spiritual

realms of an age and puts those conceptions into such utterance that his voice becomes genuinely the voice of the time.

I would not underestimate the importance of this form of leadership. It has been said that, for example, something of the secret of the power of Abraham Lincoln lay in that when he spoke the people of the North felt that they heard their better selves speaking aloud. Our own Scriptures tell us that in Jesus Christ the thoughts of many hearts shall be revealed. A portion of the truth of this passage appears in the power of Jesus to make clear to us our own best selves. Thus many a leader aids in the establishment of the Kingdom of Righteousness by so stating the truth that the people of a particular period accept the truth as their own, and exert that force of public opinion which enables the truth to stand fast as a working force among the other forces of this workaday world.

Important as this leader is, however, there is another even more important—namely, the prophet. For the prophet labours not at expressing the ideas of the people at a particular moment, but at shaping their thought and at putting content into it. To recur to our figure of speech, the prophet is not so much the mountain as one of

the forces which put the ideas into the mind of the people. In the nature of the case this means that he is not himself likely to be popular. He is not concerned so much with what the people are thinking as with what they ought to think. His utterances may at first be greeted with howls of derision rather than with shouts of applause. By the very fact of repetition, however, and repetition many times repeated, he makes the people familiar with his message, so that at last they admit it as something to be taken into account. The people may never acknowledge or become conscious of their debt to the prophet, but he has been influential in moulding their thinking, nevertheless.

The prophet is preëminently one who seizes an eternal truth and gives it phrasing with reference to the needs of a particular time. We sometimes hear it said that it is the duty of the prophet merely to announce general principles as principles, without reference to the concrete details of a given situation. Men tell us, for example, that Jesus made no direct attack upon some of the outstanding evils of his day, but that he announced an ideal concerning God and an ideal concerning man that in the end made slavery, for instance, impossible. Therefore, the

prophet is to be rebuked if he does not confine himself to principles to be stated in the abstract. There could be no more complete misunderstanding of the actual procedure of Amos and Isaiah and Jeremiah and of Jesus than this. It is impossible to read the Gospels and feel that Jesus conceived of himself as one merely uttering formal principles or proclaiming truth in the abstract. To be sure, Jesus preached the eternal truth concerning God and man, but he preached in a fashion that made a difference to their attitude toward men in the institutions of their own time. Nobody who reads the account of the opposition of the official leaders of Judaism to Jesus is in the slightest degree deceived by irrelevancies like the charge of blasphemy against him. Jesus was not indeed claiming to be a king in the ordinary meaning, but he was so stating his truth that that truth, if left to run unhindered, would make a vast difference to established orders and vested interests and official dogmas. Indeed, the dangers to the enemies of Jesus were so immediate that they felt from the beginning that nothing short of killing him would check a course sure to be disastrous to them.

Abstract principles never become intelligible to the mass of mankind until they are stated

concretely with direct reference to the needs of actual circumstances. Likewise, the prophets of the Old Testament so proclaimed their ideals concerning God and man as to make them matters of current discussion and conflict in the great crises of Israel's history. They did indeed announce principles valid for all time. They were men of the future, not in that they predicted the course of future events, but in that they uttered ideas in the language of a given day and with reference to the needs of that day. The first step toward understanding prophetic utterance is to find what it meant to its first hearers. The utterances, of course, had a sweep of meaning utterly beyond the needs of a particular hour, but we understand that farther reach only by looking at an utterance in the light of the immediate circumstances which called it forth. He who formulates general principles may perform an indispensable work as a philosopher or even as a theologian, but he does not work after the manner of a prophet.

Again it is urged against the prophet, whenever he appears, that he should come with some constructive suggestion as to how to remedy the evils which he denounces. It is avowed with wearisome frequency that the prophets are too

often negative in their message. They merely tell us what is wrong. This criticism can be rightly urged against some whose message is critical and nothing else. I am thinking of the prophet, however, as one who is speaking in the name of a divinely human ideal. Like Amos, he sets God's righteousness over against the actual statesmanship of the nations of his day, or like Isaiah, he puts the universality of God's care for the nations over against the one hundred per cent. patriotism of the Jews, or like Hosea, he places the divine tenderness over against current popular cruelty and callousness. The prophet judges shortcomings in the light of a lofty ideal and does not point out faults merely in the temper of a fault-finder. Now it is the task of the prophet to keep the ideal on high. His first concern is for the ideal. If he takes his eyes off the ideal for the sake of making all manner of practical adjustments in human society, he may dull the keenness of his vision of the ideal itself.

We may recur again to the example of Jesus. Jesus held on high the essential conception that God is Christlike and that it is the duty of men to be Christlike. He stated this double doctrine against the background of a particular age and in face of the organized opposition of official

selfishness like that of the Temple interests. Yet Jesus would not allow himself to be diverted from his main purpose of holding the ideal on high by any discussion of ways and means to work that ideal into practical expression. It is easy for us to lose ourselves by asking the question, "What would Jesus do if he were confronted by the intricate and tangled problems which confront us to-day?" Probably if Jesus were here to-day he would do what he did in the olden days. He would definitely rebuke our age in the name of his Christlike ideal of God and of man, but he would call upon us as individuals and as members of groups to make the actual adjustments which would set the ideal to work.

It is altogether aside from the mark for some upholder of an established order in theology, or in social or national or racial relationships, to tell us that the prophets of the Church should keep silent until they can make practical suggestions as to how to improve the conditions which they condemn. There is admittedly a sense in which the reorganization of society in its detailed working-out has to be left to technical experts—to social engineers, to legislators, to judges, in short, to men proficient in the physical and social sciences. If, however, these experts are not to be

the masters of society themselves but the servants of society, it is entirely in order for the prophet to tell them that they must conform to Christian ideals of human and divine values, even if the detailed adjustment of the order of society to meet the divine ideals must be left to their technical skill. In a democracy like ours, it is especially important for us to draw distinction between the ideal toward which society is to move and the detailed mapping out of the steps of that movement toward the ideal. One of the temptations peculiar to our society arises out of the likelihood that the scientific expert, whose work is so important for our welfare, will lose the power to see life steadily and to see it whole, and will become obsessed with the all-importance of his own specialty.

To take a single illustration, just now pertinent, let us think of that protest against militarism which is as truly a voice of divine prophecy as was the voice of prophecy in the Old Testament. The prophetic ideal of universal peace has never been more powerfully stated than in the words about beating swords into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks. If we can believe in inspiration at all, we must believe in the inspiration of the men in all churches and in all

lands who are to-day carrying on the warfare against war in the name of an ideal of God and of man. Now in all this debate no doubt the military expert should be listened to, but he is the last man to whom we should listen. We are not to start our discussion with reports of military committees on arms and armaments or with the guesses of generals and admirals as to how soon we are to have another war. When an enlightened Christian conscience determines what is the Christian attitude toward the problem of war and peace, we may then call on the expert to answer whatever question we may deem it worth while to put to him. We are not called on, however, to listen to the militarist's exposition of the course of human history and to the needs of human society from the point of view of army and navy programmes. In other words, the first duty of a Christian society is to give heed to the Christian ideal. We do not look to technical experts to tell us what those ideals should be. At the present moment, the military expert is in sad danger of getting out of his place. It should be the determined practice of democratic Christianity to make the expert in war altogether subordinate. He is simply an instrument and nothing else. By his oaths to his nation he is stopped

from saying how his expertness shall be used. It is his business to give heed to the nation and not to the duty of the nation to allow him to usurp the place of the prophet idealist.

Again it is often urged against the prophet that his voice becomes sharper and harsher with the passage of the years. Strange as it may sound this is as it should be. The farther on we move toward the fulfilment of the Christian ideal for society, the clearer becomes the contradiction between that ideal and any given state of society. The more sensitive become the faculties of men to the presence of the evils which thwart the highest development of their fellows, the more uncompromising becomes their speech. It may not be a pleasant prospect which stretches out before us, but we may as well remind ourselves that the farther we move forward, the more disturbing is likely to be the voice of a prophet. Back in earlier times, when there was much more of heavy and deadening human suffering than there is to-day, the vision of the keenest souls could not avoid being dulled to some of the more refined forms of human distress. With the lifting of these grosser burdens, the finer perceptions as to what the human ideal means get their chance and come out into expression. The sensitive fibre

then of the prophetic spirit shows itself in a type of expression that becomes progressively responsive to the demands of the best for men.

Is not this as it should be? Suppose we glance at the realm of science. What is the effect of the widespread increase of knowledge upon the temper of a genuinely scientific mind? What but an increase of unrest of spirit? The more the scientist knows, the more he sees to know. The more closely his instruments approximate the desired goal, the more eager he becomes for a more exact result. To use the old expression, the increase of the sphere of the known brings a keener realization of the vastness of the unknown beyond that sphere. So that the true scientist becomes less and less complacent and more and more exacting with himself and his fellows as the years go by. How can we expect it to be otherwise in the discovery of moral truths? We have before us in the teachings of Jesus the moral ideal which we think of as binding both for God and man. That ideal can be stated in a single sentence; namely, the Christ spirit is binding both upon God and man. To carry out the implications of this ideal, however, starts us upon a quest unending. The more we see that the Christ spirit implies, the more realms we discern out beyond

our achievement, which are still further implied. The more precise become our instruments of moral discernment, the less possible it is for us to acquiesce in the imperfections which in an earlier stage of our progress would have caused us no discomfort. I see no way of escape from the stern and disturbing cry of the prophet as we tread the path toward moral achievement. Jesus himself lifted the ideal so high as to make it inexhaustible by any achievements which we can imagine. He told us that we are to be perfect even as the Father in heaven is perfect. He hinted at one mark of such perfection in the declaration that God sends his rain and sunshine upon the evil and good alike with an even-handed impartiality that gives all men their chance. We have never yet seen anything like an adequate approach to the perfection of this ideal in any individual life or in any group. The prophet is indispensable if we are not to forget the ideal, or if we are not to tone down the ideal.

In a word, it might perhaps be just to say that the function of the prophet in a Christian society is to keep us from lowering, or diluting, or softening the ideals of God and of man which are the heart of the Christian system. Practically

we fall short of the ideal, but that is altogether different from lowering the ideal itself. Jesus said to men, "Be perfect, even as the Father in heaven is perfect." If instead he had said, "Do the best you can under all possible circumstances," his teaching would not have endured for fifty years, for such a statement is capable of perpetual lowering. It would be possible indeed to soften down the divine command that we are to be perfect, if it were not that the prophet unflinchingly holds the ideal before us. I repeat that the farther we move toward the fulfilment of the ideal the more we shall require the prophetic reënforcement of the ideal. The road is uphill all the way.

Finally, objection is now and again urged that the prophet ought to seek better balance in his utterance. We more and more lay stress on poise and what we call sanity as the marks of Christian understanding. There is considerable confusion in this objection. It is no outstanding sign of sanity to use a balanced statement when the truth calls for a marked emphasis on some one phase of moral value. There is not much suggestion of harmony in the clangour of an alarm bell, but if the ringer of the bell is announcing

the onsweep of a conflagration or a flood, he is the sanest man among his fellows, and he is acting in the way that shows the soundest poise. Of old we were reminded of the folly of those who cry "Peace, peace" when there is no peace. In the days when prophecy counted for so much in the life of Israel, the prophets who prophesied smooth things and spoke in soft and pleasant accents became suspected at once. Here again all comes back to the inherent worth of the message itself. If the popular mind is far gone in indifference toward the Christian values, the prophet can hardly be called a prophet unless he is willing to cry out harshly and fiercely. Balance of mind shows itself quite as truly in desperate effort to bring about a true balance as in an effort to steady an existing order which may violate the first principles of moral values. If we were to run back through the course of human history and, in the light of our after-knowledge, pick out the few men in the world-crises who seem now to have known exactly what they were doing, and to have shown the soundest moral understanding, we should have to choose, for the most part, those whom we now call by the name of prophet, but whom their contemporaries probably called fools.

It is an article of our Christian faith that the Church on earth is a militant body. If that Church is to be militant as a body of Christ, it must be militant as its founder was militant. It must hold without yielding to the ideals of Christ. It must not raise too much question as to what will be the cost to dogmas and institutions of attempting to put those ideals into practice. For actual shortcomings in carrying out the ideals, the Church may well seek charity and forgiveness, but the Church cannot be a Church of the prophets if there is any trace of lack of loyalty to the Christian ideal itself—or if, paradoxical as it may sound, the realization of that ideal does not seem to be farther off the more eagerly we press on toward it. In a word, it is the task of the prophet never to let us feel that we have already "attained." A satisfied prophet is a contradiction in terms. The prophet is the perpetual reminder that there is no discharge in the warfare of the spirit.

Prayer

We thank thee, O God, for the prophets. Open our eyes to see them as prophets while they are actually with us. Keep us aware that it is possible for us in all good conscience to build monuments

to the prophets of yesterday, at the very hour when we are in spirit stoning the prophets of to-day. Help us to see through the prophet's ruggedness and uncouthness of speech to the heart of his truth—and open our ears to hear him. In the name of the greatest of all prophets. Amen.

MY CHRIST

JOSEPH FORT NEWTON

RECTOR OF THE MEMORIAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL,
OVERBROOK, PHILADELPHIA

Dr. Joseph Fort Newton's spiritual pilgrimage has taken him from that great community pulpit of the City Temple, London, which he occupied during the dark war years of 1916 to 1919, to the pastorate of the Universalist Church of the Divine Paternity in New York from 1919 to 1925, and then to the ministry of the Episcopal Church, in which he succeeded Dr. Robert Norwood as rector of the Memorial Church of St. Paul, Overbrook, Philadelphia.

One can well approach a study of his preaching by catching the devotional glow and spiritual insight of his recent collection of prayers, *Altar Stairs*. For Dr. Newton is a deeply religious man, with the poet's imagination. Widely read, he knows men and manners and understands current religious thought. This sermon shows his catholicity and his hunger for the unity of Christendom. Those who wonder if Christ is no longer central in the best preaching of the day will take heart from preaching like this.

Dr. Newton was born in Decatur, Texas, in 1876; ordained to the Baptist ministry in 1893; was pastor of the First Baptist Church in Paris, Texas, from 1897 to 1898, and later pastor of non-sectarian churches in St. Louis and Dixon, Illinois, and Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and went to the City Temple, London, in 1916. He has received the degree of Litt.D. from Coe College, and of D.D. from Tufts. He has been the editor for several years of the volume known as *Best Sermons*, and is the author of *David Swing, Poet Preacher, Abraham Lincoln, Lincoln and Herndon, The Eternal Christ, Wesley and Woolman, What Have the Saints to Teach Us?, The Ambassador, The Mercy of Hell, The Sword of the Spirit, The Theology of Civilization, Some Living Masters of the Pulpit, Preaching in London, The Men's House, Preaching in New York, The Religion of Masonry, God and the Golden Rule,* and *Altar Stairs.*

MY CHRIST

JOSEPH FORT NEWTON

All things were created by Him, and for Him.
Christ in you, the hope of glory.

—Col. 1:16, 27.

It is written in the vision of St. John that there are twelve gates to the City of God. And where there is a gate there is a road leading to it. All the roads lead to the City, and the only question is whether we are travelling in the direction of the City, with our faces set thitherward and our hearts eager to be there. Then it matters little what road we may be on; for all the high roads of the spirit have one end and meet at last. There is no common starting-point, and the right way for each man is the way by which the Lord leads him.

Just so it is in the quest for Christ. No matter how far we go back into the past, we find men seeking Him—for what we call Christ has been in the world from the beginning, and was not absent from any age. Literally, He has been

the desire of all nations. Look into the dim past, led by a great artist, and you will see that this is so. If you know the Kipling story of *Puck of Pook's Hill* you cannot forget the boy and girl who are permitted to take strange journeys into the Land of Memory—where the dead live. It is only a fancy, but it gives us a glimpse of insight into the old, far-off fact.

One day we meet them upon the bare chalk-downs with an August sun beating upon their heads, and the air is sweet with drifting perfumes. They sat down to rest, and presently they saw their old friend Puck on the horseshoe curve of the downs, watching a half-naked man who was carefully chipping a flint arrowhead. They heard the man speak of the wolves that killed his comrades and destroyed their flocks, and saw him point to his body all scarred with the wounds made by the great Beast. He went on to tell of the desire that grew upon him to master the Beast, and save his people.

At last he wandered to the distant forest belt where dwelt the people who held the secret of the magic knife that could cut into the evil heart of the Beast. Watching from the distance for many days, and seeing how they dug red stones from the earth and melted them in fire, he besought

their Priestess to teach him how to make the magic knife for the sake of his people. The price he had to pay for the secret was the loss of his right eye—a price worse than death to him. But it was for his people, what else could he do? So he delivered his people from the power of the Beast, and they looked upon him as a saviour. Solitary and maimed, but "star-led to build the world," his life was passed in the shadow of a great loneliness. Thus,

> "Forth marched the peoples
> Slowly emerging
> Out of the darkness
> Into the day,
> God-led and guided
> All the rough way."

How rough the way was no student of the story of faith needs to be told. Through long ages men groped toward the Christ spirit, each age having its man to deliver his people from the Great Beast—and he in turn prophetic, in his insight and sorrow, of yet higher victories. At last the dream came true; what men had sought was made flesh in Galilee, and they beheld His grace and beauty. As the dim roads of prophecy and dream led up to Christ, so now He walks all the paths of life—Himself the Way and the Truth.

Where a man meets Christ, along whatever road —that is his starting-point, and if he will follow on the gates of the City will come in sight. So great is the reality of Christ that no man can know His fullness, but only that segment of it that is nearest to his own life.

Take, for example, St. Augustine. As a youth he was a libertine, a prodigal son spending his days in riotous living; but Christ found him deep in "the horrible pit and miry clay," and raised him thence and cleansed him. That was his experience, rich and wonderful, whereof he tells in pages that can never die; and it shaped and coloured his ideas in after days. The master-thoughts of his theology are sin and grace, repentance and faith. But others as holy, as wise, and as true teach differently, because their experience has been different. There was Clement of Alexandria, who was born a pagan and nurtured in the philosophy and literature of Greece. Happily he was kept from the pollution of his surroundings. Like many another, he craved intellectual satisfaction, and after years of riotous thinking he found it in Christ. For him Christ was the Teacher, and if in his writings he says little about sin, he says much about Christ as the Light.

Dear John Woolman was so tender of heart that the sight of suffering afflicted him like a calamity. Food cooked by the hands of slaves he could not eat. A bird with a broken wing, a horse lashed by a brutal driver, the cruelty of man to man—any kind of injustice broke his heart. He was a forerunner of a day when the Golden Rule will be, not a dream, but a necessity —when men cannot eat when they sit down to feast, seeing behind them the shivering shapes of the poor! His Christ was a fathomless Compassion, the ineffable Pity. Another, journeying "o'er moor and fen," under the shadow of a great sorrow, finds Christ to be the Comforter. And still another, weary of the weight of all this unintelligible world, or crushed by heavy woes, finds Him to be the Burden-bearer, who gives rest to the heavy laden. Thus each may call Him "My Christ"—for He is all that anyone sees, and more than all men can think or dream.

So we might go on to speak of the Christ of the artist, of the philosopher, of the poet—and there is a very real sense in which the man of science may find Him to be the final fact of nature, and the key to it. Assuredly He is as much a force in the order of things as any law of nature, as moral values are as much a part of the universe as salts

and acids. Because He is so great, there should be the widest sympathy and the warmest fellowship between us, seeing that we are partakers of a like precious Reality. Alas, it has not always been easy for the Augustines to be charitable to the Clements, and almost as difficult for the Clements to have patience with the Augustines. Nor should anyone make the mistake of thinking that, because he cannot enjoy the experience of another, he is a stranger to Christ. Far from it. Each man has his own need, and that need, whatever it may be, is his point of contact with Christ. It is enough to have met Christ, if your heart is going out to Him in faith and desire. There is no one way where all must go, where none can wander and all must know—no, there are many gates to the City of God.

From this you will perceive my reason for speaking of Him as My Christ—even mine. For some what follows may seem to be a series of wild words, but it is not. Instead, it is a calm understatement of the reality of Christ as life, and time and trial and struggle have given me to see it. Blessed, or cursed, with an intellect critical, analytical, of ultra-conservative cast and habit of thought, tinged by a temperament which, if it had its way, would make this world

dismal and dun-coloured—it is surely significant that a mind so made up finds itself, midway in this mortal life, a devoted lover of Christ and a humble student of the great mystics. Never will the day fade from my memory when the prologue of the Gospel of John became, for me, the profoundest philosophy on earth. Not as an argument but as a vision of the ultimate reality taking human form and speaking the truth of things. Let me tell you a little of what that vision means, if so that we may see where our paths have crossed and whither we are going. Studying Christ is like looking at a sunrise: each man who looks is filled with the beauty and glory of it, but the splendour is undiminished. Over all its ineffable wonder falls, subduing the mind, softening the heart, and exalting the life.

First of all, my Christ is a real fact of history—no phantom whose life is a poem in the writing of which all humanity collaborated. That is a pretty fancy but not a fact. There have been many efforts to show that Jesus was a myth, a human life imagined, a drama; but they fall flat. No. He lived on earth "the human life of God," having a place in history and a date in time. What that means to you it is not given to me to know, but it means much to me. It means that

we follow no dim wisp of dreams, but a real person who walked among men on this old earth. Whatever else Jesus was, He was a man—sweetly, richly, vividly human; and His divinity was revealed through His humanity. He stands nearest to us by His humanness, His limitations of knowledge, His weariness. That is why His words, once spoken, have never ceased to speak. That is why when you hear them it is like a voice in your own heart—like your mother waking you in the morning with a kiss in the days that come not back.

But my Christ is more than a person: He is a personality; that is, a person with some force behind it, having its sources in the Unseen. Recall His power to attract persons, and the way in which men who saw Him suddenly rose and wanted to follow Him. That is ever the mark of personality. Then, too, His words bear an impress and aspect so unique and characteristic that they are living witnesses for Him. But He is more than a personality, He is a growing power in history, too. While He lived everything seemed to be against Him, but He was not dismayed. Just when His work commenced, the forces of evil gathered and He had to die. Yet he took that early and tragic death and made of it the very path

by which to reach the heart of man. With Love alone He won His way, until to-day He is nearer, it oft seems, than when He walked in Galilee.

Nor is this to mistake an illusive feeling of the heart for reality. It is a fact of history that Christ is the great spiritual dynamic of the world—a force to be reckoned with by him who would estimate the spiritual possessions of mankind. How is it that the personality of Christ persists and keeps pace with the ages? How can such a thing be? There are many explanations, but they do not explain. Some talk of the Christ-ideal, but without a living Reality behind it that ideal would long ago have faded. No; stripped of all sentiment and looked at in the cool light of critical fact, Christ is no mere ideal, but a living Presence and force in the world to-day. Let me offer a suggestion—that the Spirit that is behind history, in it and over it, and the Spirit that we call Christ, are one and the same; else why is He our eternal contemporary, in defiance of time, distance, and death?

And not only of history, but of nature, too, with her order now luminous and dark, now glorious and terrible. Christ is not an exotic, not an alien force coming from without, but the flower of the long process of evolution, revealing,

in His fragrance and fruit, the spirit and meaning of the whole. That was my reason for saying that a man of science, if he will look back from Christ as from a high watch-tower, will see that He is the final act of nature, as He is the central figure of history. And looking forward, the light within Him of the new heavens and the new earth is the grandest of all prophecies. Hovering above all our wronged and troubled earth is His vision of the kingdom of heaven—the one unifying vision of the life of man, giving it coherence and a promise of ordered advance out of chaos. He has made it real, and He will yet make it come true for us. As an unveiling of what lies at the heart of this dark world, He answers all my questions, and satisfies my heart utterly.

Of course, it is one thing to accept this as a philosophy and another thing to lay it to heart, love it, live in the light of it, and think in the glow of its revealing splendour. For me Christ is not simply a Fact in time, or a Force in history, but also, and much more, a Friend—and in this sense He becomes more to me as my feet journey farther inland on the isthmus of life. For many faith is less easy as life becomes more real; but when I come to Him with deep questionings, a hush falls over me, and I know that He is ques-

tioning me. In that silence, far sweeter than any music, is my rest. Then it is that my heart burns within me along the way, and His words, always wonderful in their depth and surprise, come home to me with a vivid beauty that is not of earth, leaving a still singing in my soul—as if He were speaking them to me for the first time.

Therefore, my Christ, while deeply and tenderly human, out-tops humanity, and has no peer among the sons of man. He is the Divine Reality, so far as we can know it or need to know it. That is why He satisfies all types and conditions of minds, and why they find in Him a tie of fellowship; all one in their littleness, one, also, in their joy—His grace as manifold as human need is diverse. No mere mortal could thus satisfy, much less cleanse, this "little, infinite thing—the human soul." When men put theories aside and listen to His voice, they hear the Eternal calling them in words the sweetest, the profoundest, and the most simple ever moulded by human lips. So it is with me at least, and I feel that it will be so with any man who will let his heart have its way.

My only hope for the future of the race, and the ultimate reign of purity and justice, is in Christ. Everything else may fail—but He will

not fail. There is something in His gentle, persistent spirit as inevitable, and ultimately as irresistible, as the movements of the natural order. Often enough the Church has failed, by folly or default, but He has come to the rescue with His reviving and reclaiming wonder. This is His world, and He will yet have His way with it. Of old, men fought against Him and put Him to death, but it was futile. They were not done with Him when they left Him hanging on the cross. In the crisis of individual souls, in the strange vicissitudes of history, over and over again, when it seemed that men had done with Him, "then came Jesus, the doors being barred, and stood in the midst." And there He stands to-day, a challenge to the heart and conscience of mankind. No earthly barrier can hinder His presence in the lives of men or the story of nations. He rolls away the great stones from all sepulchres and takes new forms and assumes new glories as the ages go by—the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. He is the Divine Life. He must increase. And His victory is as sure as the flow of the tides and the march of the stars.

So much, and far more that no words can tell, my Christ means to me. Others may have other visions of Him, seeing what it is not given me to

behold—but it is the same Christ. The man of the Stone Age seeking to deliver his people from the Beast and St. Francis living his life of beauty and pity were both followers of my Christ. If we are to take Him as the Lord and Master of the soul, it will be because He is that to us. No amount of argument or evidence can make Him so. That is why fellowship has become a key word—what St. Paul called "the fellowship of mystery," and the Church more and more takes folk of many minds as it finds them—asking no man to make profession of a faith already attained, but, rather, to become comrades in the quest and service of One who is the saviour, teacher, comforter, burden-bearer, and friend of all. It is therefore that some of us make the wise words of the poet our own:

"Brother, if your Christ be the Atoning Lamb,
The Only-Begotten of the great I am;
The Rock of Ages cleft for you,
And you say my Christ would never do,
Follow your Christ—and give me your hand.

"Brother, if my Christ be the great Ideal
The possibility of the race made real,
The lowly man of Galilee,
And I say your Christ would not help me,
Leave me my Christ—but give me your hand."

Prayer

God of Love, Lord and Giver of Truth, save us, we beseech Thee, from an ignorant faith and an unbelieving knowledge; illumine our minds with a revelation of Thyself, the source of the good and the true. Unite our hearts in the fellowship of light, that, studying in humility of spirit and with obedient hearts, we may know the truth that is hidden from the vain and haughty.

Amid all learning, O Lord, teach us the love of righteousness and the art of helping our fellow souls. May our zeal for truth be seen alike in conserving the treasures of the past and in our quest of new light, but above all in our desire to heal the hurt and heartache of humanity; in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE END

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